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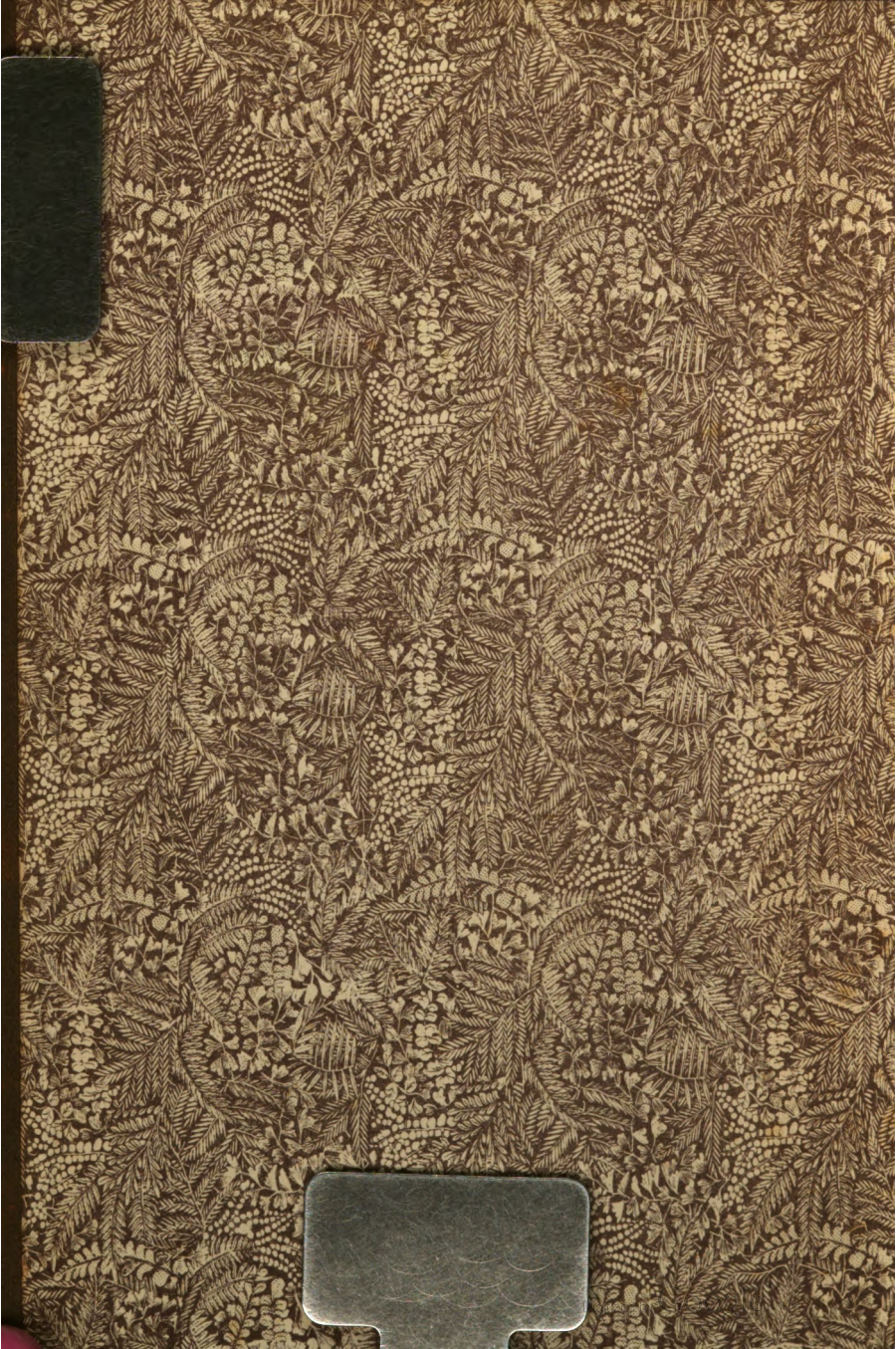
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*Letters of the martyrs of the English
Church, selected and ed. [by H.T.].*





LETTERS OF THE MARTYRS.



CRANMER.

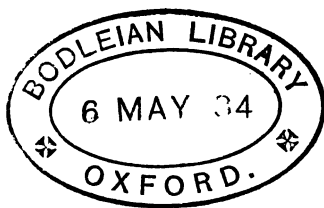
Letters of the Martyrs
of the English Church.

SELECTED AND EDITED.

"Saints who taught and led the way to Heaven."

LONDON:
W. SWAN SONNENSCHN AND CO.,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1884.



P R E F A C E .

THIS collection of Letters of the Martyrs of the English Church seems scarcely to demand any introductory words. The Letters tell their own story more vividly than any elaborating pen can tell it, and the lessons that they teach are so numerous and so obvious that for us to dwell upon them were superfluous.

This selection of the Letters has been made from the collection published by Miles Coverdale in 1564, twenty-nine years after the completion of his English-printed Bible. Several of the longer and more controversial or dogmatic letters have been omitted, the Editor's choice having lain rather with those of domestic and of general interest.

In reading this correspondence, it must always be borne in mind that it was mostly produced under great difficulties. It was, as a rule, almost impossible for the imprisoned ones to obtain materials—paper and ink—for their writing; and the marvel is that they achieved so much as they did. Furthermore, they were constantly in chains or in cramps, or on the rack, and were thus afforded but small opportunity for secret writing; and even if this were ultimately accomplished (perhaps with their own blood, in the absence of ink), their letters were intercepted by gaolers ever eagerly on the watch for such communications from their prisoners to friends and kin outside.

H. T.

TO THE READER.

In the following pages, the ancient spelling of Scripture names is frequently retained by the Writers of the Letters ; thus :—

<i>Esay</i> , or <i>Esais</i> ,	stands for	.	.	.	.	Isaiah.
<i>Jeremy</i>	„ „	.	.	.	.	Jeremiah.
<i>Elias</i> , or <i>Hely</i> ,	„ „	.	.	.	.	Elijah.
<i>Eliseus</i>	„ „	.	.	.	.	Elisha.
<i>Jonas</i>	„ „	.	.	.	.	Jonah.
<i>Osee</i>	„ „	.	.	.	.	Hosea.

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"For Thy sake are we put to death every day."—PSALM xliv.

'And are counted as sheep appointed to be slain.'—ROMANS viii.

FACSIMILE A.D. 1564.

LETTERS OF THE MARTYRS.

Thomas Cranmer.

THOMAS CRANMER was born of a good family, at Aslacton, Nottinghamshire, in 1489. As a young man he was noted for his skill and boldness in archery, hunting, riding, and all other manly sports. In 1503, he was admitted to Jesus College, Cambridge, and there distinguished himself as an earnest and gifted scholar, being finally elected a Fellow, and appointed one of the Examiners in Theology of his University. He gained the notice and favour of Henry VIII. by boldly advocating that king's divorce from Catharine of Aragon; he was summoned to Court, and, in 1532, nominated as Warham's successor in the Archbishopric of Canterbury. Cranmer greatly promoted the Reformation by printing the English Bible, and also by publishing the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments in English. Cranmer also advocated the destruction of the lesser monasteries, and opposed the famous Act of the Six Articles, which were—Transubstantiation; Communion in one kind; Vows of Chastity; The Celibacy of the Clergy; Private Masses; and Auricular Confession. In 1541 the Archbishop was committed to the Tower as a heretic. The whole rage of the Popish Church was raised against him, and through wiles and stratagems he was actually at last persuaded to recant his Protestant principles, and, in general terms, to subscribe to the Romish doctrines. He soon deeply repented his weakness, and was thereupon sentenced to death by his enemies—being burnt at the stake, in Oxford, March

21st, 1556. "On the side next the wind, he was distinctly seen, before the fire reached him, to thrust his right hand into it, and to hold it there with astonishing firmness, crying out, 'This hand hath offended.'"

THOMAS CRANMER, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, TO
QUEEN MARY.

MOST lamentably mourning and moaning himself unto your highness, Thomas Cranmer, although unworthy either to write or speak unto your highness, yet having no person that I know to be mediator for me, and knowing your pitiful ears ready to hear all pitiful complaints, and seeing so many before to have felt your abundant clemency in like case, am now constrained most lamentably, and with most penitent and sorrowful heart, to ask mercy and pardon for my heinous folly and offence, in consenting and following the testament and last will of our late Sovereign Lord, King Edward the Sixth, your Grace's brother; which will, God knoweth, God He knoweth, I never liked; nor never any thing grieved me so much that your Grace's brother did; and if by any means it had been in me to have a-letted* the making of that will, I would have done it; and what I said therein, as well to his counsel as to himself, divers of your majesty's counsel can report, but none so well as the Marquis of Northampton, and the Lord Darcy, then lord chamberlain to the king's majesty, which two were present at the communication between the king's

* Hindered.

majesty and me. I desired to talk with the king's majesty alone, but I could not be suffered, and so I failed of my purpose: for if I might have communed with the king alone, and at good leisure, my trust was that I should have prevented him from that purpose; but, they being present, my labour was in vain. Then when I could not dissuade him from the said will, and both he and his privy-council also informed me that the judges and his learned counsel said, that the act of entailing the crown, made by his father, could not be prejudicial to him, but that he, being in possession of the crown, might make his will thereof, this seemed very strange unto me; but, being the sentence of the judges, and other his learned counsel in the laws of this realm, (as both he and his counsel informed me,) methought it became not me, being unlearned in the law, to stand against my prince therein. And so at length I was required by the king's majesty himself to set to my hand to his will, saying that he trusted that I alone would not be more repugnant to his will than the rest of the counsel were (which words surely grieved my heart very sore): and so I granted him to subscribe his will, and to follow the same; which when I had set my hand unto, I did it unfeignedly, and without dissimulation. For the which, I submit myself most humbly unto your majesty, acknowledging mine offence with most grievous and sorrowful heart, and beseeching your mercy and pardon; which my heart giveth* me

* Assureth.

shall not be denied unto me, being granted before to so many, which travailed* not so much to dissuade both the king and his counsel as I did. And whereas it is contained in two Acts of Parliament, (as I understand,) that I, with the Duke of Northumberland, should devise and compass the deprivation of your majesty from your royal crown, surely it is untrue: for the duke never opened his mouth to me to move me to any such matter, nor I him; nor his heart was not such towards me, seeking long time my destruction, that he would either trust me in such a matter, or think that I would be persuaded by him. It was other of the counsel that moved me, and the king himself, the Duke of Northumberland not being present. Neither before, nor after, had I ever any privy communication with the duke of that matter; saving that, openly at the counsel table, the duke said unto me, that it became not me to say to the king as I did when I went about to dissuade him from the said will.

Now, as concerning the estate of religion, as it is used in this realm of England at this present, if it please your highness to allow me, I would gladly write my mind unto your majesty. I will never, God willing, be author of sedition, to move subjects from the obedience of their heads and rulers, which is an offence most detestable. If I have uttered my mind to your majesty, being a Christian queen and governor of this realm, (of whom

* Laboured.

I am most assuredly persuaded, that your gracious intent is, above all other things, to prefer God's true word, His honour and glory,) if I have uttered, I say, my mind unto your majesty, then I shall think myself discharged; for it lieth not in me, but in your grace only, to see the reformation of things that be amiss. To private subjects it appertaineth not to reform things, but quietly to suffer that they cannot amend; yet, nevertheless, to show your majesty my mind, in things appertaining unto God, methink it my duty, knowing that I do, and considering the place which in times past I have occupied. Yet will I not presume thereunto, without your grace's pleasure first known, and your permission obtained; whereof I, most humbly prostrate to the ground, do beseech your majesty: and I shall not cease daily to pray to Almighty God for the good preservation of your majesty from all enemies, bodily and ghostly, and for the increase of all goodness, heavenly and earthly, during my life—as I do and will do, whatsoever come of me.

ANOTHER LETTER TO QUEEN MARY.

MAY it please your majesty to pardon my presumption, that I dare be so bold to write to your highness: but very necessity constraineth me; that your majesty may know my mind rather by mine own writing than by other men's reports. So it is that upon Saturday, being the seventh day of this month, I was cited to appear at Rome, the eightieth day after, there to make answer

to such matters as should be objected against me, upon behalf of the king and your most excellent majesty: which matters, the Thursday following, were objected against me by Dr. Martin and Dr. Story, your majesty's proctors, before the Bishop of Gloucester, sitting in judgment by commission from Rome. But, alas! it cannot but grieve the heart of any natural subject, to be accused of the king and queen of his own realm, and specially before an outward* judge, or by authority coming from any person out of this realm, where the king and queen, as if they were subjects within their own realm, shall complain and require justice at a stranger's hands against their own subject, being already condemned to death by their own laws; as though the king and queen could not do or have justice within their own realm against their own subjects, but they must seek it at a stranger's hands, in a strange land; the like whereof (I think) was never seen. I would have wished to have had some meaner adversaries; and I think that death shall not grieve me much more, than to have my most dread and most gracious sovereign lord and lady (to whom, under God, I do owe all obedience) to be mine accusers in judgment within their own realm, before any stranger and outward power.

But forasmuch as in the time of the prince of most famous memory, King Henry VIII., your grace's father, I was sworn never to consent that the Bishop of Rome

* Foreign.

should have or exercise any authority or jurisdiction in this realm of England, therefore, lest I should allow his authority contrary to mine oath, I refused to make answer to the Bishop of Gloucester, sitting here in judgment by the pope's authority, lest I should run into perjury.

Another cause why I refused the pope's authority is this,—that his authority, as he claimeth it, repugneth to the crown imperial of this realm, and to the laws of the same, which every true subject is bound to defend. First, for that the pope saith, that all manner of power, as well temporal as spiritual, is given first to him of God; and that the temporal power he giveth unto emperors and kings to use it under him, but so as it be always at his commandment and beck. But, contrary to this claim, the imperial crown and jurisdiction temporal of this realm is taken immediately from God, to be used under Him only, and is subject unto none but to God alone.

Moreover, the imperial laws and customs of this realm, the king in his coronation, and all justices when they receive their offices, be sworn, and all the whole realm is bound to defend and maintain. But, contrary hereunto, the pope by his authority maketh void, and commandeth to blot out of our books, all laws and customs being repugnant to his laws, and declareth accursed all rulers and governors, all the makers, writers, and executors of such laws or customs, as it appeareth by many of the pope's laws; whereof one or two I shall rehearse. In the decrees, *Distin. x.*, is written thus: "*Constitutiones*

contra canones et decreta præsulum Romanorum vel bonos mores nullius sunt momenti." That is, "The constitutions or statutes enacted against the canons and decrees of the Bishops of Rome or their good customs are of none effect." Also, "Extra de sententia excommunicationis, noverit. Excommunicamus omnes hæreticos utriusque sexus, quocunque nomine censeantur, et fautores, et receptatores, et defensores eorum: necnon et qui de cætero servari fecerint statuta edita et consuetudines contra ecclesiæ libertatem, nisi ea de capitularibus suis intra duos menses post hujusmodi publicationem sententiæ fecerint amoveri. Item excommunicamus statuarios, et scriptores statutorum ipsorum; necnon potestates, consules, rectores, et consiliarios locorum, ubi de cætero hujusmodi statuta et consuetudines editæ fuerint vel servatæ; necnon et illos qui secundum ea et præsumpserint judicare, vel in publicam formam scribere judicata." That is to say, "We excommunicate all heretics, of both sexes, what name soever they be called by, and their favourers, and receptors, and defenders; and also them that shall hereafter cause to be observed statutes and customs made against the liberty of the Church, except they cause the same to be put out of their books or records, within two months after the publication of this sentence. Also we excommunicate the statute makers, and writers of those statutes; and also the potentates, consuls, governors, and counsellors of places where such statutes and customs shall be made or kept; and also those that shall presume to give judgment

according to them, or put into public form of writing the matters so judged." Now by these laws, if the Bishop of Rome's authority, which he claimeth by God, be lawful, all your grace's laws and customs of your realm, being contrary to the pope's laws, be naught, and as well your majesty, as your judges, justices, and all other executors of the same, stand accursed among heretics ; which God forbid ! And yet this curse can never be avoided, if the pope have such power as he claimeth, until such times as the laws and customs of this realm, being contrary to his laws, be taken away and blotted out of the law books. And although there be many laws of this realm contrary to the laws of Rome, yet I name but a few : as, to convict a clerk * before any temporal judge of this realm, for debt, felony, murder, or for any other crime ; which clerks, by the pope's laws, be so exempt from the king's laws, that they can be nowhere sued but before their ordinary. Also the pope by his laws may give all bishoprics and benefices spiritual ; which, by the laws of this realm, can be given but only by the kings, and other patrons of the same, except they fall into the lapse. By the pope's laws *jus patronatus* shall be sued only before the ecclesiastical judge ; but by the laws of this realm, it shall be sued before the temporal judge. And to be short, the laws of this realm do agree with the pope's laws like fire and water. And yet the kings of this realm have provided for their laws, by the *præmunire* : so that if any man have let† the execution of the laws of this realm by any

* Clergyman.

† Hindered,

authority from the see of Rome, he falleth into the *præmunire*. But to meet with this, the popes have provided for their laws by cursing. For whosoever letteth * the pope's laws to have full course within this realm, by the pope's power standeth accursed. So that the pope's power treadeth all the laws and customs of this realm under his feet ; cursing all that execute them, until such time as they give place unto his laws. But it may be said, that notwithstanding all the pope's decrees, yet we do execute still the laws and customs of this realm. Nay, not all quietly, without interruption of the pope. And where we do execute them, yet we do it unjustly, if the pope's power be of force, and for the same we stand excommunicate, and shall do, until we leave the execution of our own laws and customs. Thus we be well reconciled to Rome, allowing such authority, whereby the realm standeth accursed before God, if the pope have any such authority.

These things, as I suppose, were not fully opened in the Parliament House, when the pope's authority was received again within this realm ; for if they had, I do not believe that either the king or queen's majesty, or the nobles of this realm, or the commons of the same, would ever had consented to receive again such a sovereign authority, so injurious, hurtful, and prejudicial, as well to the crown as to the laws and customs and state of this realm, as whereby they must needs acknowledge themselves to be accursed. But none could open this matter

* Hindereth.

well but the clergy ; and *that*, such of them as had read the pope's laws, whereby the pope hath made himself as it were a God. These seek to maintain the pope, whom they desired to have their chief head, to the intent they might have (as it were) a kingdom and laws within themselves, distinct from the laws of the crown, and wherewith the crown may not meddle ; and so, being exempted from the laws of the crown, might live in this realm like lords and kings, without damage or fear of any man, so that they please their high and supreme head at Rome. For this consideration, I ween, some that knew the truth, held their peace at the Parliament ; whereas, if they had done their duties to the crown and whole realm, they should have opened their mouths, declared the truth, and showed the perils and dangers that might ensue to the crown and realm. And if I should agree to allow such authority within this realm, whereby I must needs confess that your most gracious highness and also your realm should ever continue accursed, until you shall cease from the execution of your own laws and customs of your realm, I could not think myself true, either to your highness, or to this my natural country, knowing what I do know. Ignorance, I know, may excuse other men ; but he that knoweth how prejudicial and injurious the power and authority which he challengeth everywhere is to the crown, laws, and customs of this realm, and yet will allow the same, I cannot see in any way how he can keep his due allegiance, fidelity, and truth to the crown and state of this realm.

Another cause I alleged, why I could not allow the authority of the pope ; which is this, That by his authority he subverteth not only the laws of this realm, but also the laws of God ; so that, whosoever be under his authority, he suffereth them not to be under Christ's religion purely, as Christ did command. And, for one example, I brought forth, that whereas by God's laws all Christian people be bound diligently to learn His Word, that they may know how to believe and live accordingly, for that purpose He ordained holydays, when they ought, leaving apart all other business, to give themselves wholly to know and serve God. Therefore God's will and commandment is, that when the people be gathered together, the ministers should use such language as the people may understand and take profit thereby, or else hold their peace. For as a harp or lute, if it give no certain sound that men may know what is stricken, who can dance after it ? for all the sound is in vain : so is it vain and profiteth nothing, saith Almighty God by the mouth of St. Paul, if the priest speak to the people in a language which they know not, for else he may profit himself, but profiteth not the people, saith St. Paul. But herein I was answered thus, that St. Paul spake only of preaching ; that the preacher should speak in a tongue which the people did know, or else his preaching availeth nothing. But if the preaching availeth nothing, being spoken in a language which the people understand not, how should any other service avail them, being spoken in the same language ? And that yet St. Paul meant not only of preaching, it appeareth

plainly by his own words ; for he speaketh by name expressly of praying, singing, praising, and thanksgiving of God, and all other things which the priests say in the churches, whereunto the people say *Amen* (which they used not in preaching, but in other divine service) ; that whether the priests rehearse the wonderful works of God, or the great benefits of God unto mankind above all other creatures, or give thanks unto God, or make open profession of their faith, or humble confession of their sins, with earnest request of mercy and forgiveness, or make suit or request unto God for anything ; then all the people, understanding what the priests say, might join their minds and voices with them and say, *Amen*—that is to say, allow what the priests say ; that the rehearsal of God's universal works and benefits, the giving of thanks, the profession of faith, the confession of sins, and the requests and petitions of the priests and the people, might ascend up into the ears of God altogether, and be as a sweet savour, odour, and incense in His nose : and thus was it used many hundred years after Christ's ascension. But the aforesaid things cannot be done when the priests speak to the people in a language not known ; and so they or their clerk in their name say *Amen*, but they cannot tell whereunto : whereas Saint Paul saith, How can the people say *Amen* to thy well-saying, when they understand not what thou sayest ? And thus was St. Paul understood of all interpreters, both the Greeks and Latins, old and new, school-authors and others, that I have read, until about thirty years past ; at which time

one Eckius, with other of his sort, began to devise a new exposition, understanding St. Paul of preaching only. But when a good number of the best learned men reputed within this realm, some favouring the old, some the new learning, as they term it—(where * indeed that which they call the old is the new, and that which they call the new is, indeed, the old)—but when a great number of such learned men of both sorts were gathered together at Windsor for the reformation of the service of the Church, it was agreed by both without controversy, not one saying contrary, that the service of the Church ought to be in the mother tongue ; and that St. Paul in Chapter xiv. to the Corinthians was so to be understood. And so is St. Paul to be understood in the civil law, more than a thousand years past : where Justinianus, a most godly emperor, in a synod writeth on this manner : “Jubemus ut omnes, episcopi pariter et presbyteri, non tacito modo, sed clara voce quæ a fidei populo exaudiatur, sacram oblationem et preces in sacro baptisinate adhibitæ celebrent, quo majori exinde devotione in depromendis Domini Dei laudibus audientium animi efferantur. Ita enim et divus Paulus docet in epistola ad Corinthios ; si solummodo benedicat spiritus, quomodo is qui privati locum tenet, dicet ad gratiarum actionem tuam, Amen, quandoquidem quid dicas non videt? Tu quidem pulchre gratias agis, alter autem non ædificatur.” That is to say, “ We command, that all bishops and priests celebrate the

* Whereas.

holy oblation and prayers used in holy baptism, not after a still and close manner, but with a clear, loud voice, that they may be plainly heard of the faithful people, so as the hearers' minds may be lifted up thereby with the greater devotion, in hearing the praises of the Lord God. For so Paul teacheth also in the Epistle to the Corinthians: 'If the spirit do only bless or say well, how shall he that occupieth the place of a private person, say Amen to thy thanksgiving? for he perceiveth not what thou sayest. Thou dost give thanks well, but the other is not edified.'" And not only the civil law, and all other writers a thousand and five hundred years continually together, have expounded St. Paul not of preaching only but of other service said in the church; but reason also giveth the same, that if men be commanded to hear anything, it must be spoken in a language which the hearers understand; or else, as St. Paul saith, what availeth it to hear? So that the pope giving a contrary commandment, that the people coming to the church shall hear they know not what, and answer they know not whereto, taketh upon him to command not only against reason; but also directly against God.

And again I said, Whereas our Saviour Christ ordained the sacrament of His most precious body and blood, to be received of all Christian people under the forms both of bread and wine, and He said of the cup, Drink ye all of this; the pope giveth a clean contrary commandment, that no layman shall drink of the cup of their salvation: as though the cup of salvation by the

blood of Christ pertained not to laymen. And whereas Theophilus Alexandrinus (whose works St. Jerome did translate about eleven hundred years past) saith, that if Christ had been crucified for the devils, His cup should not be denied them ; yet the pope denieth the cup of Christ to Christian people, for whom Christ was crucified : so that if I should obey the pope in these things, I must needs disobey my Saviour Christ. But I was answered hereto (as commonly the papists do answer), that under the form of bread is whole Christ's flesh and blood ; so that whosoever receiveth the form of bread, receiveth as well Christ's blood as His flesh. Let it be so : yet in the form of bread only, Christ's blood is not drunken but eaten ; not received in the cup under form of wine as Christ commanded, but eaten with the flesh under the form of bread ; and moreover the bread is not the sacrament of His blood, but of His flesh only ; nor the cup is not the sacrament of His flesh, but of His blood only ; and so the pope keepeth from all lay persons the sacrament of their redemption by Christ's blood, which Christ commanded to be given unto them. And furthermore, Christ ordained the sacrament in two kinds, the one separated from the other, to be a representation of His death, where His blood was separated from His flesh, which is not represented in one kind alone ; so that the lay people receive not the whole sacrament whereby Christ's death is represented, as He commanded. Moreover, as the pope taketh upon him to give the temporal sword or royal and imperial power to kings and princes,

so doth he likewise take upon him to depose them from their imperial states, if they be disobedient to him ; and commandeth the subjects to disobey their princes, assayling* the subjects as well of their obedience as of their lawful oaths made unto their true kings and princes—directly contrary to God's commandment, who commandeth all subjects to obey their kings or other rulers under them. One John, Patriarch of Constantinople in the time of St. Gregory, claimed superiority above all other bishops ; to whom St. Gregory writeth, That therein he did injury to his brethren which were equal with him, that is to say, the Bishop of Rome, of Alexandria, and of Antiochia, in which were patriarchial sees, as well as Constantinople, and were brethren one to another. But saith St. Gregory, if any one shall exalt himself above all the rest to be the universal bishop, the same passeth† in pride : but now the Bishop of Rome exalteth himself not only above all bishops, but also above all kings and emperors, and above the whole world, taking upon him to give and take away, to set up and put down, as he shall think good. And as the devil, having no such authority, yet took upon him to give unto Christ all the kingdoms of the world, if He would fall down and worship him ; in like manner the pope taketh upon him to give empires and kingdoms, being none of his, to such as will fall down and worship him and kiss his feet. And moreover his lawyers and glosers‡ so flatter him, that

* Freeing.

† Surpasseth.

‡ Flatterers.

they say he may command emperors and kings to hold his stirrup when he lighteth upon his horse ; and to be his footmen ; and that if any emperor or king give him any thing, they give him nothing but that is his own, and that he may dispense against God's Word, against the Old and New Testament, against St. Paul's Epistles, and against the Gospel. And furthermore, whatsoever he doth, although he draw innumerable people by heaps with himself into hell, yet may no mortal man reprove him ; because he, being judge of all men, may be judged of no man ; and thus he sitteth in the temple of God, as he were a god, and nameth himself God's Vicar, and yet he dispenseth* against God. If this be not to play Antichrist's part, I cannot tell what is Antichrist (which is no more to say, but Christ's enemy and adversary), who shall sit in the temple of God, advancing himself above all other, yet by hypocrisy and feigned religion, shall subvert the true religion of Christ, and, under pretence and colour of Christian religion, shall work against Christ, and therefore hath the name of Antichrist. Now if any man lift himself higher than the pope hath done, who lifteth himself above all the world ; or can be more adversary to Christ, than to dispense against God's laws ; and, where Christ hath given any commandment, to command directly the contrary ; that man must needs be taken for Antichrist. But until the time that such a person may be found, men may easily conjecture

* Relaxeth God's law.

where to find Antichrist. Wherefore seeing the pope thus, to overthrow both God's laws and man's laws, taketh upon himself to make emperors and kings to be vassals and subjects unto him, specially the crown of this realm, and the laws and customs of the same, I see no mean* how I may consent to admit this usurped power within this realm, contrary to mine oath, mine obedience to God's law, mine allegiance and duty to your majesty, and my love and affection to this realm. This that I have spoken against the power and authority of the pope, I have not spoken (I take God to record and judge) for any malice I owe to the pope's person—whom I know not, but I shall pray to God to give him grace, that he may seek above all things to promote God's honour and glory, and not to follow the trade of his predecessors in these latter days: nor I have not spoken it for fear of punishment and to avoid the same, thinking it rather an occasion to aggravate than to diminish my trouble: but I have spoken it for my most bounden duty to the crown, liberties, laws, and customs of this realm, but most especially to discharge my conscience in uttering the truth to God's glory; casting away all fear, by the comfort which I have in Christ's words, who saith, "*Fear not them that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul; but fear him that can cast both body and soul into hell.*" He that, for fear to lose this life, will forsake the truth, shall lose the everlasting life; and he

* Method.

that for the truth's sake will spend his life, shall find everlasting life. And Christ promiseth to stand fast with them before His Father, which will stand fast with Him here: which comfort is so great that whosoever hath his eyes fixed upon Christ, cannot greatly pass* of this life, knowing that he may be sure to have Christ stand by him in the presence of His Father in heaven.

As touching the sacrament, I said, that forasmuch as the whole matter standeth in the understanding of these words of Christ, "*This is My body, this is My blood,*" I say that Christ in these words made demonstration of the bread and wine, and spake figuratively, calling bread His body, and wine His blood; because He ordained them to be the sacraments of His body and blood. And where† the papists say in these two points contrary unto me, that Christ called not bread His body, but a substance uncertain, nor spake figuratively; herein I said I would be judged by the old Church, and that doctrine which could be proved the elder, that I would stand unto. And forasmuch, as I have alleged in my book, many old authors, both Greeks and Latins, which about a thousand years after Christ continually taught as I do: if they could bring forth but one old author that saith in these two points, as they say, I offered, six or seven years ago, and do offer yet still, that I will give place to them. But when I bring forth any author that speaketh in

* Value.

† Whereas.

most plain terms as I do, yet saith the other part, that the authors meant not so: as if they would say, that the authors spake one thing and meant clean contrary. And upon the other part, when they cannot find any one author that saith in words as they say, yet say they, that the authors meant as they say. Now, whether they or I speak more to the purpose herein, I refer it to the judgment of all indifferent hearers. Yea, the old Church of Rome, about a thousand years together, neither believed nor used the sacrament as the Church of Rome hath done of late years. For in the beginning, the Church of Rome taught a pure and a sound doctrine of the sacrament: but after that, the Church of Rome fell into a new doctrine of transubstantiation; and with the doctrine they changed the use of the sacrament, contrary to what Christ commanded, and the old Church of Rome used above a thousand years. And yet to deface the old, they say that the new is the old: wherein, for my part, I am content to the trial to stand. But their doctrine is so fond and uncomfortable, that I marvel that any man would allow it, if he knew what it is: and whatsoever* they bear the people in hand,† that which they write in their books hath neither truth nor comfort. For, by their doctrine, of one body of Christ is made two bodies; one natural, having distance of members with form and proportion of a man's perfect body, and this body is in heaven; but the body of Christ

* Howsoever.

† Behave towards.

in the sacrament, by their own doctrine, must needs be a monstrous body, having neither distance of members, nor form, fashion, nor proportion of a man's natural body; and such a body is in the sacrament (teach they), and goeth into the mouth with the form of bread, and entereth no farther than the form of bread goeth, nor tarrieth no longer than the form of bread is by natural heat in digesting, so that when the form of bread is digested, that body of Christ is gone. And forasmuch as evil men be as long in digesting as good men, the body of Christ (by their doctrine) entereth as far, and tarrieth as long in wicked as in godly men. And what comfort can be herein to any Christian man, to receive Christ's unshapen body, and it to enter no farther than the stomach, and to depart by-and-by, as soon as the bread is consumed? It seemeth to me a more sound and comfortable doctrine, that Christ hath but one body, and that hath form and fashion of a man's true body; which body spiritually entereth into the whole man, body and soul: and though the sacrament be consumed, yet whole Christ remaineth and feedeth the receiver unto eternal life, if he continue in godliness, and never departeth until the receiver forsake Him. And as for the wicked, they have not Christ within them at all; who cannot be where Belial is. And this is my faith, and (as me seemeth) a sound doctrine according to God's Word, and sufficient for a Christian to believe in that matter. And if it can be showed unto me that the pope's authority is not prejudicial to the things before-

mentioned, or that my doctrine in the sacrament is erroneous (which I think cannot be showed), then I was never nor will be so perverse to stand wilfully in mine own opinion, but I shall, with all humility, submit myself unto the pope, not only to kiss his feet, but another part also.

Another cause why I refused to take the Bishop of Gloucester for my judge was respect* of his own person being more than once perjured. First, for that he, being divers times sworn never to consent that the Bishop of Rome should have any jurisdiction within this realm, but to take the king and his successors for supreme heads of this realm, as by God's laws they be; contrary to this lawful oath, the said bishop sat then in judgment by authority from Rome, wherein he was perjured, and not worthy to sit as a judge.

The second perjury was, that he took his bishopric both of the queen's majesty and of the pope, making to each of them a solemn oath; which oaths be so contrary, that in the one he must needs be perjured. And furthermore, in swearing to the pope to maintain his laws, decrees, constitutions, ordinances, reservations, and provisions, he declareth himself an enemy to the imperial crown, and to the laws and state of this realm; whereby he declareth himself not worthy to sit as a judge within this realm. And for these considerations I refused to take him for my judge.

* Consideration.

THIS WAS WRITTEN IN ANOTHER LETTER TO THE
QUEEN.

I LEARNED by Dr. Martin, that at the day of your majesty's coronation, you took an oath of obedience to the pope of Rome ; and the same time you took another oath to this realm, to maintain the laws, liberties, and customs of the same. And if your majesty did make an oath to the pope, I think it was according to the other oaths which he useth to minister to princes ; which is, to be obedient to him, to defend his person, to maintain his authority, honour, laws, lands, and privileges. And if it be so, then I beseech your majesty to look upon your oath made to the crown and the realm, and to expend and weigh the two oaths together, to see how they agree, and then to do as your grace's conscience shall give* you ; for I am surely persuaded, that willingly your majesty will not offend, nor go against your conscience for nothing. But I fear me there be contradiction in your oaths, and that those that should have informed your grace thoroughly did not their duties therein. And if your majesty ponder the two oaths diligently, I think you shall perceive that you were deceived, and then your highness may use the matter as God shall put in your heart.—Furthermore, I am kept here from company of learned men, from books, from counsel, from pen and ink, saving at this time to write to your majesty, which all were necessary for a man

* Direct.

in my case. Wherefore I beseech your majesty, that I may have such of these as may stand with your majesty's pleasure. And as for mine appearance at Rome, if your majesty will give me leave, I will appear there, and I trust that God shall put in my mouth to defend His truth there, as well as here ; but I refer it wholly to your majesty's pleasure.

Your poor orator,* T. C.

TO THE LORDS OF THE COUNCIL.

IN most humble wise sueth unto your right honourable lordships Thomas Cranmer, late Archbishop of Canterbury, beseeching the same to be a means† for me unto the queen's highness, for her mercy and pardon. Some of you know by what means I was brought and trained unto the will of our late sovereign lord, King Edward the Sixth, and what I spake against the same: wherein I refer me to the reports of your honours. Furthermore, this is to signify unto your lordships, that upon Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday last past, were open disputations here in Oxford against me, Master Ridley, and Master Latimer, in three matters concerning the sacrament. First, of the real presence ; secondly, of transubstantiation ; and, thirdly, concerning the sacrifice of the mass. How the other two were used I cannot tell ; for we were separated, so that none of us knew what the other said, nor how they were ordered. But as concerning

* Petitioner.

† To intercede.

myself, I can report that I never knew nor heard of a more confused disputation in all my life. For albeit there was one appointed to dispute against me, yet every¹ man spake his mind and brought forth what him liked without order; and such haste was made, that no answer could be suffered to be given fully to any argument; and in such weighty and large matters there was no remedy, but the disputations must needs be ended in one day, which can scanty* well be ended in three months. And when we had answered them, then they would not appoint us one day to bring forth our proofs that they might answer us again, being required of me thereunto; whereas I myself have more to say than can be well discussed in twenty days. The means to resolve the truth, had been to have suffered us to answer fully to all that they could say, and then they again to answer to all that we could say. But why they would not answer us, what other cause can there be, but that either they feared the matter, that they were not able to answer us? or else (as by their haste might well appear) they came not to speak the truth, but to condemn us in post haste, before the truth might be thoroughly tried and heard? For in all haste we were all three condemned of heresy, upon Friday. This much I thought good to signify unto your lordships, that you may know the indifferent handling of matters, leaving the judgment thereof unto your wisdoms; and I beseech your lordships to remember me, a poor

* Scarcely.

prisoner unto the queen's majesty, and I shall pray, as I do daily, to God, for the long preservation of your good lordships in all godliness and felicity.

A LETTER

Wherein he reproveth and condemneth the false and slanderous reports of the Papists, which said that he had set up Mass again at Canterbury.

As the devil, Christ's ancient adversary, is a liar and the father of lying, even so hath he stirred up his servants and members to persecute Christ and His true Word and religion with lying, which he ceaseth not to do most earnestly at this present. For whereas the prince of famous memory, King Henry the Eighth, seeing the great abuses of the Latin mass, reformed something therein in his time ; and also our late sovereign lord, King Edward the Sixth, took the same whole away for the manifold errors and abuses thereof, and restored in the place thereof Christ's Holy Supper, according to Christ's own institution, and as the apostles in the Primitive Church used the same. The devil goeth about by lying to overthrow the Lord's Holy Supper, and to restore his Latin satisfactory mass, a thing of his own invention and device. And to bring the same more easily to pass, some have abused the name of me, Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury, reporting abroad that I have set up the mass at Canterbury, and that I offered to say mass at the burial of our late sovereign prince, King Edward the

Sixth, and also that I offered to say mass before the queen's highness, and at Paul's Church, and I wot not where. And although I have been well exercised these twenty years to suffer and bear evil reports and lies, and have been much grieved thereat, but have borne all things quietly ; yet when untrue reports and lies turn to the hindrance of God's truth, they be in no wise to be suffered. Wherefore these be to signify unto the world, that it was a false, flattering, lying, and dissembling monk, which caused mass to be set up there, without mine advice or counsel : *Reddat illi Dominus in die illo*. And as for offering myself to say mass before the queen's highness, or in any other place, I never did it, as her grace well knoweth. But if her grace give me leave, I shall be ready to prove against all that will say to the contrary, that all that is said in the Holy Communion set out by the most innocent and godly prince, King Edward the Sixth, in his high court of parliament, is conformable to the order which our sovereign Christ did both observe and command to be observed, and which His apostles and Primitive Church used many years ; whereas the mass in many things not only hath no foundation of Christ, His apostles, nor the Primitive Church, but is manifestly contrary to the same, and containeth many horrible abuses in it. And although many unlearned and malicious do report, that Master Peter Martyr is unlearned, yet if the queen's highness will grant thereunto, I with the said Master Peter Martyr, and other four or five which I shall choose, will, by God's grace, take upon us to

defend not only the common prayers of the Church, the ministration of the sacraments, and other rites and ceremonies, but also all the doctrine and religion set out by our sovereign lord, King Edward the Sixth, to be more pure and according to God's Word than any other that hath been used in England these thousand years: so that God's Word may be the judge, and that the reasons and proofs upon both parties may be set out in writing, to the intent as well that all the world may examine and judge thereon, as that no man shall start back from his writing. And where* they boast of the faith that hath been in the Church this thousand and five hundred years, we will join with them in this point, and that the doctrine and usage is to be followed which was in the Church a thousand and five hundred years past; and we shall prove that the order of the Church, set out at this present in this realm by Act of Parliament, is the same that was used in the Church a thousand and five hundred years past, and so shall they be never able to prove theirs.

AN EPISTLE

To a certain Lawyer for his advice and counsel
touching his appeal.

THE law of nature requireth of all men, that, so far forth as it may be done without offence to God, every one should seek to defend and preserve his own life.

* Whereas.

Which thing when I about three days ago bethought myself of, and therewithal remembered how that Martin Luther appealed in his time from Pope Leo the Tenth to a general council; lest I should seem rashly and unadvisedly to cast away myself, I determined to appeal in like sort to some lawful and free general council. But seeing the order and form of an appeal pertaineth to the lawyers, whereof I myself am ignorant, and seeing that Luther's appeal cometh not to my hand, I purposed to break my mind in this matter to some faithful friend and skilful in the law, whose help I might use in this behalf; and you only among other came to my remembrance, as a man most meet in this university for that purpose. But this is a matter that requireth great silence, so that no man know of it before it be done. It is so, that I am summoned to make mine answer at Rome, the sixteenth day of this month: before the which day I think it good after sentence pronounced to make mine appeal. But whether I should first appeal from the judge-delegate to the pope, and so afterward to the general council; or else leaving the pope, I should appeal immediately to the council; herein I stand in need of your council. Many causes there be, for the which I think good to appeal. First, because I am by an oath bound never to consent to the receiving of the Bishop of Rome's authority into this realm. Besides this, whereas I utterly refused to make answer to the articles objected unto me by the Bishop of Gloucester, appointed by the pope to be my judge, yet I was content to answer Martin and Story;

with this protestation, that mine answer should not be taken as made before a judge, nor yet in place of judgment, but as pertaining nothing to judgment at all. And, moreover, after I had made mine answer, I required to have a copy of the same, that I might, either by adding thereunto, by altering, or taking from it, correct and amend it as I thought good. The which, though both the Bishop of Gloucester and also the king and queen's proctors promised me, yet have they altogether broken promise with me, and have not permitted me to correct my said answers according to my request ; and yet, notwithstanding have, as I understand, registered the same as acts formally done in place of judgment. Finally, forasmuch as all this my trouble cometh upon my departing from the Bishop of Rome and from the popish religion, so that now the quarrel is betwixt the pope himself and me, and no man can be a lawful and indifferent judge in his own cause ; it seemeth, methink, good reason that I should be suffered to appeal to some general council in this matter : especially seeing the law of nature, as they say, denieth no man the remedy of appeal in such cases. Now, since it is very requisite that this matter should be kept as close as may be, if, perhaps, for lack of perfect skill herein, you shall have need of further advice, then I beseech you, even for the fidelity and love you bear to me in Christ, that you will open to no creature alive whose the case is. And forasmuch as the time is now at hand, and the matter requireth great expedition, let me obtain this much of

you, I beseech you, that laying aside all other your studies and business for the time, you will apply this my matter only, till you have brought it to pass. The chiefest cause in very deed, to tell you the truth, of this mine appeal is, that I might gain time, if it shall so please God, to live until I have finished mine answer against Marcus Antonius Constantius, which I have now in hand. But if the adversaries of the truth will not admit mine appeal, as I fear they will not, God's will be done ! I pass not upon it,* so that God may therein be glorified, be it by my life or by my death. For it is much better for me to die in Christ's quarrel and to reign with Him, than here to be shut up and kept in the prison of this body ; unless it were to continue yet still awhile in this warfare for the commodity† and profit of my brethren, and to the further advancing of God's glory : to whom be all glory for evermore. *Amen.* There is also yet another cause why I think good to appeal : that, whereas I am cited to go to Rome to answer there for myself, I am notwithstanding kept here fast in prison, that I cannot there appear at the time appointed. And moreover, forasmuch as the state I stand in is a matter of life and death, so that I have great need of learned counsel for my defence in this behalf ; yet when I made my earnest request for the same, all manner of counsel and help of proctors, advocates, and lawyers, was utterly denied me.

Your loving friend, T. C.

* I regard it not.

† Benefit.

TO MISTRESS WILKINSON, A GODLY MATRON,
Exhorting her to fly in the time of persecution, and to
seek her dwelling where she might serve God ac-
cording to His Word.

THE true Comforter in all distress is only God, through his Son Jesus Christ; and whosoever hath Him, hath company enough, although he were in a wilderness all alone; and he that hath twenty thousand in his company, if God be absent, is in a miserable wilderness and desolation. In Him is all comfort, and without Him is none. Wherefore, I beseech you, seek your dwelling there, as* you may truly and rightly serve God, and dwell in Him, and have Him ever dwelling in you. What can be so heavy a burden as an unquiet conscience, to be in such a place as† a man cannot be suffered to serve God in Christ's true religion? If you be loth to depart from your kin and friends, remember that Christ calleth them His mother, sisters, and brothers, that do His Father's will. Where we find therefore God truly honoured according to His will, there we can lack neither friend nor kin. If you be loth to depart for‡ slandering of God's Word, remember that Christ, when His hour was not yet come, departed out of His country into Samaria, to avoid the malice of the Scribes and Pharisees; and commanded His apostles, that if they were pursued in one place they should fly to another. And was not

* Where.

† Where.

‡ For fear of.

Paul let down by a basket out at a window to avoid the persecution of Areta? And what wisdom and policy he used from time to time to escape the malice of his enemies, the Acts of the Apostles do declare. And after the same sort did the other apostles: albeit, when it came to such a point, that they could no longer escape danger of the persecutors of God's true religion, then they showed themselves that their flying before came not of fear, but of godly wisdom to do more good; and that they would not rashly, without urgent necessity, offer themselves to death, which had been but a temptation* of God. Yea, when they were apprehended and could no longer avoid, then they stood boldly to the profession of Christ: then they showed how little they passed of† death; how much they feared God more than men; how much they loved and preferred the eternal life to come above this short and miserable life. Wherefore I exhort you, as well by Christ's commandment as by the example of Him and His apostles, to withdraw yourself from the malice of your and God's enemies, into some place where God is most purely served; which is no slandering of the truth, but a preserving of yourself to God and the truth, and to the society and comfort of Christ's little flock. And that you will do, do it with speed, lest by your own folly you fall into the persecutors' hands. And the Lord send his Holy Spirit to lead and guide you wheresoever you go; and all that be godly will say, Amen.

T. C.

* A tempting.

† Cared for, regarded.

Nicholas Ridley.

NICHOLAS RIDLEY was born early in the sixteenth century at

Wilmontswick, Northumberland, and about the year 1518 was entered at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge. After studying there for some time, he went to the Sorbonne in Paris, there to increase his knowledge of theology, returning, in 1529, once more to Cambridge to continue his studies, and, in 1537, he was chosen senior proctor of that University. In this capacity it was that Ridley was one of the three to sign the famous declaration from Cambridge that the pope "had no more authority and jurisdiction derived him from God in this kingdom of England than any other foreign bishop." In 1539 Ridley opposed the Six Articles, and, in 1541, in Canterbury, preached with such zeal against the abuses of popery that his fellow-preachers informed against him. Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, also endeavoured to entrap him; but, as all accusations were submitted to Cranmer, Ridley was acquitted. On the accession of Edward VI. in 1547, Ridley was created Bishop of Rochester, and, together with Cranmer, was employed in compiling the Book of Common Prayer. In 1550, Bonner was deprived of the Bishopric of London, and Ridley nominated in his place, filling the office with great dignity. It was at about this time that, in conjunction with Cranmer, Ridley drew up the forty-two articles of faith. Upon the death of Edward VI., Ridley supported the cause of the Lady Jane Grey, but on its miscarrying submitted himself to Queen Mary, by whom he was, however, ungraciously received, and almost immediately afterwards committed to the Tower, whence, after eight months, he was removed to Oxford; and there, on October 1st, 1555, condemned to be burnt for heresy, the sentence being carried out on the 15th of the same month.

TO THE QUEEN'S MAJESTY.

IT may please your majesty, for Christ our Saviour's sake, in a matter of conscience (and now not for myself, but for other poor men), to vouchsafe to hear and understand this mine humble supplication. It is so (honourable princess), that in the time while I was in the ministry of the see of London, divers poor men, tenants thereof, have taken new leases of their tenantries and holdings, and some have renewed and changed their hold, and therefore have paid fines and sums of money, both to me, and also to the Chapter of Paul's, for the confirmation of the same. Now I hear say, that the Bishop which occupieth the same room now will not allow the aforesaid leases, which must redound to many poor men's utter ruin and decay; wherefore, this is mine humble supplication unto your honourable grace, that it may please the same, for Christ's sake, to be unto the aforesaid poor men their gracious patron and defender, either that they may enjoy their aforesaid leases, and years renewed (as when their matter shall be heard with conscience, I suppose, both justice, conscience, and equity shall require; for that their leases shall be found (I trust) made without fraud or coven, either of their part or of mine; and also the old rents always reserved to the see, without any kind of damage thereof); or if this will not be granted, then that it may please your gracious highness to command that the poor men may be restored to their former leases and years, and may have rendered to them again such sums of

money as they paid to me and to the chapter for their leases and years so now taken from them ; which thing, concerning the fines paid to me, may be easily done, if it shall please your majesty to command some portion of those goods which I left in my house to be given unto them. I suppose that half of the value of my plate which I left in mine offices, and especially in an iron chest in my bed-chamber, will go nigh to restore all such fines received ; the true sums and parcels whereof are not set in their leases ; and therefore (if that way shall please your highness) they must be known by such ways and means as your majesty by the advice of men of wisdom and conscience shall appoint. But yet, for Christ's sake, I crave and most humbly beseech your majesty, of your most gracious pity and mercy, that the former way may take place. I have also a poor sister, that came to me out of the North with three fatherless children for her relief, whom I married after to a servant of mine own house : she is put out of that which I did provide for them. I beseech your honourable grace, that her case may be mercifully considered : and that the rather, in contemplation that I never had of him which suffered indurance at my entrance to the see of London one penny of his movable goods, for it was almost half-a-year after his deposition, afore I did enter in that place ; yea, and also if any were left known to be his, he had license to carry it away, or there for his use it did lie safe ; and his officers do know, that I paid for the lead which I found there when I occupied any

of it to the behoof of the church or of the house. And moreover, I had not only no part of his movable goods, but also, as his old receiver and then mine, called Master Staunton, can testify, I paid for him, towards his servants, common liveries and wages, after his deposition, fifty-three li. or fifty-five pounds, I cannot tell whether. In all these matters, I beseech your honourable majesty to hear the advice of men of conscience, and especially the Archbishop now of York; which, for that he was continually in my house a year and more before mine imprisonment, I suppose he is not altogether ignorant of some part of these things; and also his grace doth know my sister, for whose succour and some relief, now unto your highness I make most humble suit.

The 16th day of October, 1555.

N. R.

AN ANSWER TO A LETTER WRITTEN UNTO HIM BY
WEST, SOMETIME HIS CHAPLAIN.

I WISH you grace in God, and love of the truth; without the which truly stablished in men's hearts by the mighty hand of Almighty God, it is no more possible to stand by the truth in Christ in time of trouble, than it is for the wax to abide the heat of the fire. Sir, know you this, that I am (blessed be God!) persuaded that this world is but transitory, and (as St. John saith) the world passeth away and the lust thereof. I am persuaded Christ's words to be true—Whosoever shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father

which is in heaven ; and I believe that no earthly creature shall be saved, whom the Redeemer and Saviour of the world shall before His Father deny. This the Lord grant, that it may be so grafted, established, and fixed in my heart, that neither things present nor to come, high nor low, life nor death, be able to remove me thence. It is a goodly wish that you wish me, deeply to consider things pertaining unto God's glory : but if you had wished also that neither fear of death, nor hope of worldly prosperity, should let* me to maintain God's Word and His truth, which is His glory and true honour, it would have liked me well. You desire me, for God's sake, to remember myself. Indeed, Sir, now it is time so to do, for so far as I can perceive, it standeth me upon no less danger than of the loss both of body and soul ; and I trow then it is time for a man to awake, if any thing will awake him. He that will not fear Him that threateneth to cast both body and soul into everlasting fire, whom will he fear ? With this fear, O Lord, fasten thou together our frail flesh, that we never swerve from Thy laws. You say you have made much suit for me. Sir, God grant that you have not, in suing for my worldly deliverance, impaired and hindered the furtherance of God's Word and His truth. You have known me long indeed, in the which time it hath chanced me (as you say) to mislike some things. It is true, I grant : for sudden changes, without substantial and necessary

* Hinder,

cause, and the heady setting forth of extremities, I did never love. Confession unto the minister which is able to instruct, correct, comfort, and inform the weak, wounded, and ignorant conscience, indeed I ever thought might do much good in Christ's congregation, and so I assure you I think even at this day. My doctrine and my preaching, you say, you have heard often, and after your judgment have thought it godly, saving only for the sacrament; which thing, although it was of me reverently handled, and a great deal better than of the rest (as you say), yet in the margin you write warily, and in this world wisely—"and yet methought all sounded not well." Sir, but that I see so many changes in this world, and so much alteration, else at this your saying I would not a little marvel. I have taken you for my friend, and a man whom I fancied for plainness and faithfulness, as much (I assure you) as for your learning: and have you kept this so close in your heart from me unto this day? Sir, I consider more things than one, and will not say all that I think. But what need you to care what I think, for anything that I shall be able to do unto you, either good or harm? You give me good lessons, to stand in nothing against my learning, and to beware of vainglory. Truly, Sir, I herein like your counsel very well, and, by God's grace, I intend to follow it unto my life's end.

To write unto those whom you name, I cannot see what it will avail me. For this I would have you know, that I esteem nothing available for me, which also will

not further the glory of God. And now, because I perceive you have an entire zeal and desire of my deliverance out of this captivity and worldly misery, if I should not bear you a good heart in God again, methink I were to blame. Sir, how nigh the day of my dissolution and departure out of this world is at hand, I cannot tell: the Lord's will be fulfilled, how soon soever it shall come. I know the Lord's words must be verified on me, that I shall appear before the incorrupt Judge, and be accountable to Him of all my former life. And although the hope of His mercy is my sheet-anchor of eternal salvation, yet am I persuaded, that whosoever wittingly neglecteth and regardeth not to clear his conscience, he cannot have peace with God nor a lively faith in His mercy. Conscience therefore moveth me (considering you were one of my family and one of my household, of whom then I think I had a special cure, and of all them which were within my house; which indeed ought to have been an example of godliness to all the rest of my cure, not only of good life, but also in promoting of God's Word to the uttermost of their power: but, alas! now when the trial doth separate the chaff from the corn, how small a deal it is, God knoweth, which the wind doth not blow away. This conscience,* I say, doth move me) to fear lest the lightness of my family shall be laid to my charge, for lack of more earnest and diligent instruction which should have been

* Knowledge, the knowing this.

done. But blessed be God, which hath given me grace to see this my default, and to lament it from the bottom of my heart, before my departing hence. This conscience doth move me also now to require both you and my friend Doctor Harvy to remember your promises made to me in times past, of the pure setting forth and preaching of God's Word and His truth. These promises, although you shall not need to fear to be charged with them of me hereafter before the world, yet look for none other (I exhort you as my friends), but to be charged with them at God's hand. This conscience and the love that I bear unto you, biddeth me now say unto you both in God's name, Fear God and love not the world; for God is able to cast both body and soul into hell fire. When His wrath shall suddenly be kindled, blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. And the saying of St. John is true: All that is in the world, as the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but of the world; and the world passeth away and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." If this gift of grace, which undoubtedly is necessarily required unto eternal salvation, were truly and unfeignedly grafted and firmly established in men's hearts, they would not be so light so suddenly to shrink from the maintenance and confession of the truth, as is now (alas!) seen so manifestly of so many in these days. But here, peradventure, you would know of me what is the truth. Sir, God's Word is the truth, as St. John saith, and that

even the same that was heretofore. For albeit man doth vary and change as the moon, yet God's Word is stable and abideth one for evermore: and of Christ it is truly said, Christ yesterday and to-day, the same is also for ever.

When I was in office, all that were esteemed learned in God's Word, agreed this to be a truth in God's Word written; that the common prayer of the Church should be had in the common tongue. You know I have conferred with many, and I ensure* you I never found man (so far as I do remember), neither old nor new, gospeller nor papist, of what judgment soever he was, in this thing to be of a contrary opinion. If then it were a truth of God's Word, think you that the alteration of the world can make it an untruth? If it cannot, why then do so many men shrink from the confession and maintenance of this truth, received once of us all? For what is it I pray you else, to confess or deny Christ in this world, but to maintain the truth taught in God's Word, or for any worldly respect to shrink from the same? This one thing have I brought for an ensample: other things be in like case, which now particularly I need not to rehearse. For he that will forsake wittingly, either for fear or gain of the world, any one open truth of God's Word, if he be constrained, he will assuredly forsake God and all His truth, rather than he will endanger himself to lose or to leave that he loveth better in deed † than he doth

* Assure.

† In reality.

God and the truth of His Word. I like very well your plain speaking, wherein you say, I must either agree or die : and I think that you mean of the bodily death which is common both to good and bad. Sir, I know I must die, whether I agree or no. But what folly were it then to make such an agreement, by the which I could never escape this death, which is so common to all, and also incur the guilt of death and eternal damnation ! Lord, grant that I may utterly abhor and detest this damnable agreement so long as I live. And because (I daresay) you wrote of friendship unto me this short earnest advertisement, and, I think, verily wishing me to live and not to die ; therefore, bearing you in my heart no less love in God than you do me in the world, I say unto you in the Word of the Lord (and that I say to you I say to all my friends and lovers in God), that if you do not confess and maintain, to your power and knowledge, that which is grounded upon God's Word, but will, either for fear or gain of the world, shrink and play the *Apostata*, indeed you shall die the death : you know what I mean. And I beseech you all, my true friends and lovers in God, remember what I say ; for this may be the last time peradventure that ever I shall write unto you.

From Bocardo in Oxford, *the 8th day of April*, 1554.

N. R.

TO MASTER BRADFORD,
Prisoner in the King's Bench.

WELL BELOVED in Christ our Saviour, we all with one heart wish you, with all those that love God in deed and truth, grace and health ; and specially to our dearly beloved companions, which are in Christ's cause, and the cause both of their brethren and of their own salvation, ready and willing to put their neck under the yoke of Christ's cross. How joyful it was to us to hear the report of Doctor Taylor, and of his godly confession, etc., I ensure* you it is hard for me to express. Blessed be God which was, and is, the giver of that and all godly strength and stomach in the time of adversity. As for the rumours that have or do go abroad, either of our relenting or massing, we trust that they which know God and their duty towards their brethren in Christ will not be too light of credit to believe them. It is not the slanderer's evil tongue, but a man's own evil deed, that can with God defile a man ; and therefore, by God's grace, you shall never have cause to do otherwise than you say you do, that is, not to doubt but that we will continue, etc. Like rumour as you have heard of our coming to London, hath been here spread of the coming of certain learned men prisoners hither from London ; but as yet we know no certainty whether of these rumours is or shall be more true. Know you, that we have you in our

* Assure.

daily remembrance, and wish you and all the rest of our aforesaid companions well in Christ. It should do us much comfort if we might have knowledge of the state of the rest of our most dearly beloved, which in this troublesome time do stand in Christ's cause, and in the defence of the truth thereof. We are in good health, thanks be to God, and yet the manner of our treatment doth change as sour ale doth in summer. It is reported to us of our keepers, that the University beareth us heavily.* A coal chanced to fall in the night out of the chimney, and burnt a hole in the floor, and no more harm was done, the bailiffs' servants sitting by the fire. Another night there chanced a drunken fellow to multiply words, and for the same he was set in Bocardo. Upon these things, as is reported, there is risen a rumour in the town and country about, that we would have broken the prison with such violence, as, if the bailiffs had not played the pretty men, we should have made an escape. We had, out of our prison, a wall that we might have walked upon, and our servants had liberty to go abroad in the town or fields; but now both they and we are restrained of both. The Bishop of Worcester passed by us through Oxford, but he did not visit us. The same day began our restraint to be more, and the Book of the Communion was taken from us by the bailiffs, at the mayor's commandment. No man is licensed to come unto us; afore they might, that would, see us upon

* Hath ill will to us.

the wall, but that is so grudged at, and so evil reported, that we are now restrained, etc. Sir, blessed be God, with all our evil reports, grudgings, and restraints, we are merry in God ; and all our care is, and shall be by God's grace, to please and serve Him, of whom we look and hope, after these temporal and momentary miseries, to have eternal joy and perpetual felicity, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Peter and Paul, and all the blessed company of the angels in heaven, through Jesus Christ our Lord. As yet there was never learned man, or any scholar or other that visited us since we came into Bocardo, which now in Oxford may be called a college of quondams ; for, as you know, we be no fewer here than three, and I dare say, every one well contented with his portion, which I do reckon to be our heavenly Father's gracious and fatherly good gift. Thus fare you well. We shall, with God's grace, one day meet together and be merry : the day assuredly approacheth apace. The Lord grant that it may shortly come ; for before the day come, I fear me the world will wax worse and worse. But then all our enemies shall be overthrown and trodden under foot, righteousness and truth then shall have the victory, and bear the bell away ; whereof the Lord grant us to be partners, and all that sincerely love the truth. We all pray you, as you can, to cause all our commendations to be made to all such, as you know did visit us and you when we were in the tower, with their friendly remembrances and benefits. Mistress Wilkinson, and Mistress Warcup, hath not forgotten us ;

but ever since we came into Bocardo, with their charitable and friendly benevolence, have comforted us : not that else we lack (for God be blessed, which ever hitherto hath provided sufficiently for us), but it is a great comfort, and an occasion for us to bless God, when we see that He maketh them so friendly to tender us, whom some of us were never familiarly acquainted withal.

Yours in Christ, N. R.

TO MASTER BRADFORD.

BROTHER BRADFORD, I wish you, in Christ our Saviour, grace, mercy, and peace, and to all them which are with you or anywhere else captives in Christ ; and to hear that ye be all in good health, and stand constantly in the confession of Christ's Gospel, it doth heartily rejoice us. Know you likewise that we all here be (thanks be to God !) in good health and comfort, watching with our lamps light (I trust in God), when it shall please our Master, the Bridegroom, to call us to wait upon Him unto the marriage. Now, we suppose, the day doth approach apace, for we hear that the parliament is dissolved. The burgesses of Oxford are come home, and other news we hear not, but that the king is made protector to the prince to be born, and that the bishops have full authority, *ex officio*, to inquire of heresies. Before the parliament began, it was a rumour here, that certain from the convocation house was appointed, yea, ready to have come to Oxford, and then there was

spied out one thing to lack, for want of a law to perform their intent. Now, seeing they can want no law, we cannot but look for them shortly, I trust to God's glory, let them come when they will, etc.

Brother Bradford, I marvel greatly of good Austin, where he is, for that I heard say he promised his master to have been here before this time, and he had from me that I would be loth to lose, yea, to want when time shall be that it might do (nay, help me to do) my Lord and my Master Christ service. I mean my scribblings, "De abominationibus sedis Romanæ et pontificum Romanorum." I have no copy of the same, and I look daily to be called *in certamen cum antiquo serpente*; and so I told him, and I ween you also, by whose means I was more moved to let him have them. I doubt not of his fidelity. I pray God he be in health and at liberty, for I have been and am careful* for him. I have heard that Master Grimbold hath gotten his liberty: if without any blemish of Christ's glory, I am right glad thereof. My brother-in-law is where he was, that is in Bocardo, the common gaol of the town. I have written here a letter to Master Hooper; I pray you cause it to be written to him again. Commend me to all your prison fellows and our brethren in Christ. If Austin were here I would have had more to say. The Lord grant that all be with him well; who ever preserve you, and all that love our Saviour Christ in sincerity and truth. Amen.

* Anxious.

Yours, by God's grace, in our Master Christ's cause, unto the stake ; and thenceforth without all danger and peril for ever and ever. I am sure you have heard of our new apparel, and I doubt not but London will have their talk of it. Sir, know you that although this seemeth to us in our case much thankworthy, yet have we not that apparel that we look for : for this in time will wear ; and that which we look for, rightly done on, will endure, and is called *stola immortalitatis*.

N. R.

TO MASTER BRADFORD.

OH, dear brother, seeing the time is now come when it pleaseth the Heavenly Father, for Christ our Saviour His sake, to call upon you, and to bid you to come, happy are you that ever you were born, thus to be awake at the Lord's calling. "Euge, serve bone and fidelis, quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituet, and intrabis in gaudium Domini." O dear brother, what meaneth this, that you are sent into your own native country? The wisdom and policy of the world may mean what they will, but I trust God will so order the matter, finally, by His fatherly providence, that some great occasion of God's gracious goodness shall be plenteously poured abroad amongst His, our dear brethren in that country, by this your martyrdom. Where the martyrs for Christ's sake shed their blood and lost their lives, O what wondrous things hath Christ afterward wrought to His glory, and confirmation of

their doctrine ! If it be not the place that sanctifieth the man, but the holy man doth by Christ sanctify the place, Brother Bradford, then happy and holy shall be that place wherein thou shalt suffer, and, [which] shall be with thy ashes in Christ's cause sprinkled over withal. All thy country may rejoyce of thee, that ever it brought forth such a one, which would render his life again in His cause of whom he had received it.

Brother Bradford, so long as I shall understand that thou art in thy journey, by God's grace I shall call upon our Heavenly Father, for Christ's sake, to set thee safely home : and then, good brother, speak you and pray for the remnant that are to suffer for Christ's sake, according to that thou then shalt know more clearly.

We do look now every day when we shall be called on, blessed be God. I ween, I am the weakest many ways of our company, and yet I thank our Lord God and Heavenly Father by Christ, that since I heard of our dear brother Rogers departing with stout confession of Christ and His truth even unto the death, my heart (blessed be God !) so rejoiced of it, that, since that time I say, I never felt any lumpish heaviness in my heart, as I grant I have felt sometimes before. O good brother, blessed be God in thee, and blessed be the time that I ever knew thee. Farewell, farewell.

Your brother in Christ, N. R.

Brother, farewell.

A LETTER WHICH HE WROTE AS HIS LAST FAREWELL

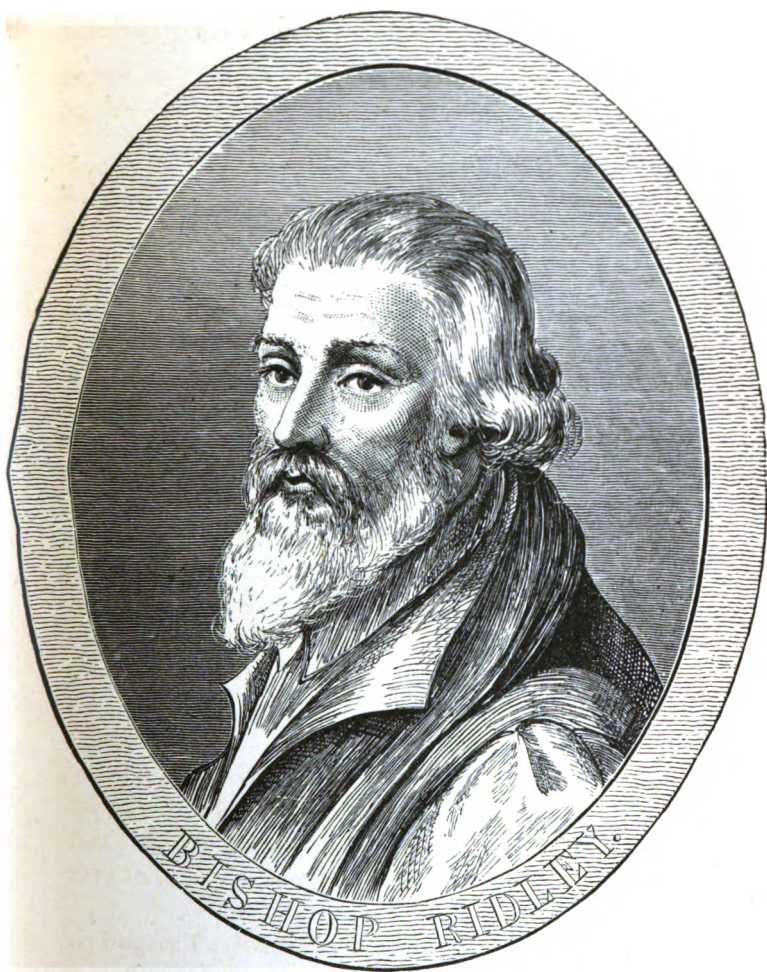
To all his true and faithful friends in God, a little before he suffered : with a sharp admonition, by the way, to the papists, the enemies of the truth.

AT THE name of Jesus let every knee bow, both of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth ; and let every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, unto the glory of God the Father. Amen.

As a man minding to take a far journey, and to depart from his familiar friends, commonly and naturally hath a desire to bid his friends farewell before his departure, so likewise now, I, looking daily when I should be called for to depart hence from you (O all ye my dearly beloved brethren and sisters in our Saviour Christ, that dwell here in this world !), having a like mind towards you all, and also (blessed be God) of this such time and leisure, whereof I right heartily thank His heavenly goodness, do bid you all, my dear brethren and sisters (I say) in Christ, that dwell upon the earth, after such manner as I can, farewell.

Farewell, my dear brother, George Shippeside, whom I have ever found faithful, trusty, and loving in all state and conditions, and now in the time of my cross, over all other to me most friendly and steadfast, and (that which liked me best) over all other things, in God's cause ever hearty.

Farewell, my dear sister Alice, his wife : I am glad to



hear of thee that thou dost take Christ's cross, which is laid now (blessed be God) both on thy back and mine, in good part. Thank thou God that hath given thee a godly and a loving husband : see thou honour him and obey him, according to God's law. Honour thy mother-in-law, his mother, and love all those that pertain unto him, being ready to do them good, as it shall lie in thy power. As for thy children, I doubt not of thy husband, but that he which hath given him a heart to love and fear God, and in God them that pertain unto him, shall also make him friendly and beneficial unto thy children, even as if they had been gotten of his own body.

Farewell, my well-beloved brother, John Ridley, of the Waltowne, and you my gentle and loving sister, Elizabeth ; whom, beside the natural league of amity, your tender love, which you were said ever to bear towards me above the rest of your brethren, doth bind me to love. My mind was to have acknowledged this your loving affection, and to have acquitted* it with deeds, and not with words alone. Your daughter Elizabeth I bid farewell, whom I love for the meek and gentle spirit that God hath given her, which is a precious thing in the sight of God.

Farewell, my beloved sister of Unthank, with all your children, my nephews and nieces. Since the departure of my brother Hugh, my mind was to have been unto them in the stead of their father ; but the Lord God must

* Requite.

and will be their Father, if they will love Him and fear Him, and live in the trade* of His law.

Farewell, my well-beloved and worshipful cousins, Master Nicholas Ridley of Willimountswick, and your wife ; and I thank you for all your kindness, showed both to me, and also to all your own kinsfolk and mine. Good cousin, as God hath set you in that our stock and kindred, not for any respect of your person, but of His abundant grace and goodness, to be as it were the bell-wether to order and conduct the rest, and hath also endued you with His manifold gifts of grace, both heavenly and worldly above others ; so I pray you, good cousin (as my trust and hope is in you), continue and increase in the maintenance of truth, honesty, righteousness, and all true godliness, and to the uttermost of your power, to withstand falsehood, untruth, unrighteousness, and all ungodliness, which is forbid and condemned by the word and laws of God.

Farewell, my young cousin, Ralph Whitfield. Oh, your time was very short with me : my mind was to have done you good, and yet you caught† in that little time a loss ; but I trust it shall be recompensed, as it shall please Almighty God.

Farewell, all my whole kindred and countrymen, farewell in Christ, altogether. The Lord which is the Searcher of secrets knoweth that, according to my heart's desire, my hope was of late that I should have come

* Practice.

† Sustained.

among you, and to have brought with me abundance of Christ's blessed Gospel; according to the duty of that office and ministry, whereunto among you I was chosen, named, and appointed by the mouth of that our late peerless prince, King Edward, and so also denounced* openly in his court by his privy council.

I warn you, all my well-beloved kinsfolk and countrymen, that ye be not amazed or astonied at the kind of my departure or dissolution: for I ensure† you I think it the most honour that ever I was called unto in all my life; and therefore I thank my Lord God heartily for it, that it hath pleased Him to call me of His great mercy unto this high honour, to suffer death willingly for His sake, and in His cause; unto the which honour He called the holy prophets, and His dearly beloved apostles, and His blessed, chosen martyrs. For know ye that I doubt no more, but that the causes wherefore I am put to death are God's causes, and the causes of the truth, than I doubt that the Gospel which John wrote is the Gospel of Christ, or that Paul's Epistles are the very Word of God. And to have a heart willing to abide and stand in God's cause and in Christ's quarrel even unto death, I ensure‡ thee (O man) it is an inestimable and an honourable gift of God, given only to the true elect and dearly beloved children of God, and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven. For the holy apostle and also martyr in Christ's cause, St. Peter, saith, "If ye suffer rebuke in the name

* Announced.

† Assure.

‡ Assure.

of Christ, that is, in Christ's cause, and for His truth's sake, then are ye happy and blessed, for the glory of the Spirit of God resteth upon you. If for rebuke's sake, suffered in Christ's name, a man is pronounced by the mouth of that holy apostle blessed and happy, how much more happy and blessed is he that hath the grace to suffer death also. Wherefore all ye that be my true lovers and friends, rejoice and rejoice with me again, and render with me hearty thanks to God our Heavenly Father, that for His Son's sake, my Saviour and Redeemer Christ, He hath vouchsafed to call me, being else without His gracious goodness in myself but a sinful and a vile wretch, to call me (I say) unto this high dignity of His true prophets, of His faithful apostles, and of His holy, elect, and chosen martyrs; that is, to die, and to spend this temporal life in the defence and maintenance of His eternal and everlasting truth.

Ye know, that be my countrymen dwelling upon the borders, where, (alas!) the true* man suffereth oftentimes much wrong at the thief's hand, if it chance a man to be slain of a thief (as it oft chanceth there), which went out with his neighbour to help him to rescue his goods again; that, the more cruelly he be slain, and the more steadfastly he stuck by his neighbour in the fight against the face of the thief, the more favour and friendship shall all his posterity have for the slain man's sake of all them that be true, as long as the memory of his face,

* Honest.

and his posterity, doth endure. Even so, ye that be my kinsfolk and countrymen, know ye (howsoever the blind, ignorant, and wicked world hereafter shall rail upon my death, which thing they cannot do worse than their fathers did of the death of Christ our Saviour, of His holy prophets, apostles, and martyrs)—know ye, I say, that both before God and all them that be godly, and that truly know and follow the laws of God, ye have and shall have, by God's grace, ever cause to rejoyce, and to thank God highly, and to think good of it, and in God to rejoyce of me your flesh and blood, whom God of His gracious goodness hath vouchsafed to associate unto the blessed company of His holy martyrs in heaven. And I doubt not, in the infinite goodness of my Lord God, nor in the faithful fellowship of His elect and chosen people, but at both their hands, in my cause, ye shall rather find the more favour and grace: for the Lord saith that He will be both to them and theirs that love Him, the more loving again in a thousand generations; the Lord is so full of mercy to them (I say) and theirs, which do love Him indeed. And Christ saith again, that no man can show more love than to give his life for his friend.

Now also know ye, all my true lovers in God, my kinsfolk and countrymen, that the cause wherefore I am put to death is even after the same sort and condition, but touching more near* God's cause, and in more

* Nearly, closely.

weighty matters, but in the general kind all one, for both is God's cause, both is in the maintenance of right, and both for the commonwealth, and both for the weal also of the Christian brother; although yet there is in these two no small difference, both concerning the enemies, the goods stolen, and the manner of the fight. For know ye all, that like as there when the poor true man is robbed by the thief of his own goods truly gotten, whereupon he and his household should live, he is greatly wronged, and the thief is stealing and robbing with violence the poor man's goods, doth offend God, doth transgress His law, and is injurious both to the poor man and to the commonwealth: so I say know ye all, that even here (in the cause of my death) it is with the Church of England, I mean the congregation of the true, chosen children of God in this realm of England, which I acknowledge not only to be my neighbours, but rather the congregation of my spiritual brethren and sisters in Christ, yea, members of one body, wherein, by God's grace, I am and have been grafted in Christ. This Church of England had of late, of the infinite goodness and abundant grace of Almighty God, great substance, great riches of heavenly treasure, great plenty of God's true and sincere Word, the true and wholesome administration of Christ's holy sacraments, the whole profession of Christ's religion truly and plainly set forth in baptism, the plain declaration and understanding of the same taught in the holy Catechism, to have been learned of all true Christians.

This Church had also a true and sincere form of manner of the Lord's Supper, wherein, according to Jesus Christ's own ordinance and holy institution, Christ's commandments were executed and done. For upon the bread and wine set upon the Lord's Table, thanks were given, the commemoration of the Lord's death was had, the bread, in the remembrance of Christ's body torn upon the cross, was broken, and the cup, in the remembrance of Christ's blood shed, was distributed, and both communicated unto all that were present and would receive them, and also they were exhorted of the minister so to do. All was done openly in the vulgar tongue, so that everything might be both easily heard, and plainly understood of all the people, to God's high glory, and the edification of the whole Church. This Church had of late the whole Divine service, all common and public prayers, ordained to be said and heard in the common congregation, not only framed and fashioned to the true vein of Holy Scripture, but also all things so set forth according to the commandment of the Lord, and St. Paul's doctrine, for the people's edification, in their vulgar tongue. It had also holy and wholesome Homilies, in commendation of the principal virtues which are commended in Scripture; and likewise other homilies against the most pernicious and capital vices that useth (alas!) to reign in this realm of England. This Church had, in matters of controversy, Articles so penned and framed after the Holy Scripture, and grounded upon the true understanding of God's Word,

that in short time, if they had been universally received, they should have been able to set in Christ's Church much concord and unity in Christ's true religion, and to have expelled many false errors and heresies, wherewith this Church (alas!) was almost overgone. But (alas!) of late, into this spiritual possession of the heavenly treasure of these godly riches are entered in thieves, that have robbed and spoiled all this heavenly treasure away. I may well complain of these thieves, and cry out upon them with the prophet, saying, "Deus, venerunt gentes in hæreditatem tuam," etc. (Psalm lxxix.) O Lord God, the Gentiles, heathen nations, are come into Thy heritage, they have defiled Thy holy temple, and made Jerusalem an heap of stones; that is, they have broken and beat down to the ground Thy holy city. This heathenish generation, these thieves of Samaria, these Sabæi and Chaldæi, these robbers have rushed out of their dens, and have robbed the Church of England of all the aforesaid holy treasure of God; they have carried it away and overthrown it; and in the stead of God's Holy Word, the true and right administration of Christ's holy sacraments, as of baptism and others, they mixed their ministry with men's foolish phantasies, and many wicked and ungodly traditions withal. In the stead of the Lord's holy table, they give the people, with much soletmn disguising, a thing which they call their mass; but, in deed and in truth, it is a very masking and mockery of the true Supper of the Lord, or rather I may call it a crafty juggling, whereby these false

thieves and jugglers have bewitched the minds of the simple people, that they have brought them from the true worship of God unto pernicious idolatry; and make them to believe that to be Christ our Lord and Saviour, which indeed is neither God nor man, nor hath any life in itself, but in substance is the creature of bread and wine, and, in the use of the Lord's Table, is the sacrament of Christ's body and blood; and for* this holy use, for the which the Lord hath ordained them in His table to represent unto us His blessed body torn upon the cross for us, and His blood there shed, it pleased Him to call them His body and blood; which understanding, Christ declareth to be His true meaning, when He saith, "Do this in the remembrance of Me." And again, St. Paul likewise doth set out the same more plainly, speaking of the same sacrament after the words of the consecration, saying, "As often as ye shall eat of this bread, and drink of this cup, ye shall set forth" (he meaneth, with the same) "the Lord's death until His coming again." And here again these thieves have robbed also the people of the Lord's cup, contrary to the plain words of Christ, written in His Gospel.

Now, for the common public prayers which were in the vulgar tongue, these thieves have brought in again a strange tongue, whereof, the people understand not one word. Wherein what do they else but rob the people of their Divine service, wherein they ought to

* On account of.

pray together with the minister? And to pray in a strange tongue, what is it but, as St. Paul calleth it, barbarousness, childishness, unprofitable folly, yea, and plain madness? For the godly articles of unity in religion, and for the wholesome homilies, what do these thieves place in the stead of them, but the pope's laws and decrees, lying legends, and feigned fables and miracles, to delude and abuse the simplicity of the rude people? Thus this robbery and theft is not only committed, nay sacrilege and wicked spoil of heavenly things, but also in the stead of the same, is brought in and placed the abominable desolation of the tyrant Antiochus, of proud Sennacherib, of the shameless-faced king of the Babylonical beast. Unto this robbery, this theft and sacrilege, for that * I cannot consent, nor, God willing, never shall so long as the breath is in my body (because it is blasphemy against God, high treason unto Christ our heavenly King, Lord, Master, and our only Saviour and Redeemer, it is plain contrary to God's Word and to God's Gospel, it is the subversion of all true godliness, and against the everlasting salvation of mine own soul, and of all my brethren and sisters whom Christ my Saviour hath so dearly bought, with no less price than with the effusion and shedding forth of His most precious blood); therefore, all ye my true lovers in God, my kinsfolk and countrymen, for this cause, I say, know ye that I am put to death; which,

* Because.

by God's grace, I shall willingly take, with hearty thanks to God therefore,* in certain hope without any doubting, to receive at God's hand again, of His free mercy and grace, everlasting life.

Although the cause † of the true ‡ man, slain of the thief helping his neighbour to recover his goods again, and the cause wherefore I am to be put to death, in a generality is both one (as I said before), yet know ye that there is no small difference. These thieves against whom I do stand are much worse than the robbers and thieves of the borders. The goods which they steal are much more precious, and their kinds of fight are far diverse. These thieves are worse, I say, for they are more cruel, more wicked, more false, more deceitful and crafty; for those will but kill the body, but these will not stick to kill both body and soul. Those, for the general theft and robbery, be called, and are indeed, thieves and robbers: but these, for their spiritual kind of robbery, are called "sacrilegi"; as ye would say, church-robbers. They are more wicked: for those go about but to spoil men of worldly things, worldly riches, gold and silver, and worldly substance; these go about in the ways of the devil, their ghostly father, to steal from the Universal Church, and particularly from every man, all heavenly treasure, true faith, true charity, and hope of salvation in the blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, yea, to spoil us of

* For it.

† Case.

‡ Honest.

our Saviour Christ, of His Gospel, of His Heavenly Spirit, and of the heavenly heritage of the kingdom of heaven so dearly purchased unto us with the death of our Master and Saviour Christ. These be the goods and godly substance whereupon the Christian before God must live, and without the which he cannot live ; these goods (I say) these thieves, these church-robbers go about to spoil us of. The which goods, as to the man of God, they excel and far pass * all worldly treasure : so, to withstand, even unto the death, such thieves as go about to spoil both us and the whole Church of such goods, is most high and honourable service done unto God. These church-robbers be also much more false, crafty, and deceitful than the thieves upon the borders : for these have not the craft so to commend their theft that they dare avouch it ; and therefore, as acknowledging themselves to be evil, they steal commonly upon the night, they dare not appear at judgments and sessions, where justice is executed ; and when they are taken and brought thither, they never hang any man, but they be oftentimes hanged for their faults. But these church-robbers can so cloke and colour their spiritual robbery, that they can make the people to believe falsehood to be truth, and truth falsehood ; good to be evil, and evil good ; light to be darkness, and darkness light ; superstition to be true religion, and idolatry to be the true worship of God ;

* Surpass.

and that which is in substance the creature of bread and wine, to be none other substance but only the substance of Christ, the living Lord, both God and man. And with this their falsehood and craft, they can so juggle and bewitch the understanding of the simple, that they dare avouch it openly in court and in town, and fear neither hanging nor heading, as the poor thieves of the borders do, but stout and strong like Nimrod, dare condemn to be burned in flaming fire, quick and alive, whosoever will go about to betray their falsehood.

The kind of fight against these church-robbers is also of another sort and kind, than is that which is against thieves of the borders. For there the true * men go forth against them with spear and lance, with bow and bill, and all such kind of bodily weapons as the true men have ; but here, as the enemies be of another nature, so the watchmen of Christ's flock, the warriors that fight in the Lord's war, must be armed and fight with another kind of weapon and armour. For here the enemies of God, the soldiers of Antichrist, although the battle is set forth against the Church by mortal men being flesh and blood, and nevertheless members of their father the devil ; yet for that their grand master is the power of darkness, their members are spiritual wickedness, wicked spirits, spirits of errors, of heresies, of all deceit and ungodliness, spirits of idolatry, super-

* Honest.

stition, and hypocrisy, which are called of St. Paul principalities and powers, lords of the world, rulers of the darkness of this world, and spiritual subtilties concerning heavenly things: and therefore our weapons must be fit and meet to fight against such; not carnal nor bodily weapons, as spear and lance, but spiritual and heavenly; we must fight against such with the armour of God, not intending to kill their bodies, but their errors, their false craft and heresies, their idolatry, superstition, and hypocrisy, and to save (as much as lieth in us) both their bodies and souls. And therefore, as St. Paul teacheth us, we fight not against flesh and blood, that is, we fight not with bodily weapons to kill the man, but with the weapons of God, to put to flight his wicked errors and vice, and to save both body and soul. Our weapons, therefore, are faith, hope, charity, righteousness, truth, patience, prayer unto God; and our sword wherewith we smite our enemies, we beat and batter and bear down all falsehood, is the Word of God. With these weapons, under the banner of the cross of Christ, we do fight, ever having our eye upon our Grand Master, Duke, and Captain, Christ: and then we reckon ourselves to triumph and to win the crown of everlasting bliss, when, enduring in this battle without any shrinking or yielding to the enemies, after the example of our Grand Captain, Christ our Master, after the example of His holy prophets, apostles, and martyrs,—when (I say) we are slain in our mortal bodies of our enemies, and are most cruelly and without all mercy murdered down

like a many* of sheep. And the more cruel, the more painful, the more vile and spiteful is the kind of the death whereunto we be put, the more glorious in God, the more blessed and happy we reckon, without all doubts, our martyrdom to be.

And thus much, dear lovers and friends in God, my countrymen and kinsfolk, I have spoken for your comfort, lest of my death (of whose life you looked peradventure sometimes to have had honesty, pleasures, and commodities) ye might be abashed or think any evil: whereas ye have rather cause to rejoice (if ye love me indeed) for that it hath pleased God to call me to a greater honour and dignity, than ever I did enjoy before, either in Rochester or in the see of London, or ever should have had in the see of Durham, whereunto I was last of all elected and named. Yea, I count it greater honour before God indeed to die in His cause (whereof I nothing doubt), than is any earthly or temporal promotion or honour that can be given to a man in this world. And who is he that knoweth the cause to be God's, to be Christ's quarrel and of His Gospel, to be the common weal of all the elect and chosen children of God, of all the inheritors of the kingdom of heaven,—who is he, I say, that knoweth this assuredly by God's Word, and the testimony of his own conscience (as I through the infinite goodness of God, not of myself, but by His grace, acknowledge

* Multitude.

myself to do),—who is he, I say, that knoweth this, and both loveth and feareth God in deed and in truth, loveth and believeth his Master Christ and His blessed Gospel, loveth his brotherhood the chosen children of God, and also lusteth and longeth for everlasting life—who is he (I say again) that would not or cannot find in his heart in this cause to be content to die? The Lord forbid that any such should be, that should forsake this grace of God. I trust in my Lord God, the God of mercies and the Father of all comfort, through Jesus Christ our Lord, that He which hath put this mind, will, and affection by His Holy Spirit in my heart, to stand against the face of the enemy in His cause, and to choose rather the loss of all my worldly substance, yea, and of my life, too, than to deny His known truth, that He will comfort me, aid me, and strengthen me evermore even unto the end, and to the yielding up of my spirit and soul into His holy hands: whereof I most heartily beseech His most holy sacred Majesty, of His infinite goodness and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Now, that I have taken my leave of my countrymen and kinsfolk, and the Lord doth lend me life and giveth me leisure, I will bid my other good friends in God, of other places also, farewell. And whom first or before other, than the University of Cambridge? whereas* I have dwelt longer, found more faithful and hearty friends,

* Where.

received more benefits (the benefits of my natural parents only excepted), than ever I did even in mine own native county wherein I was born.

Farewell, therefore, Cambridge, my loving mother and tender nurse ! If I should not acknowledge thy manifold benefits, yea, if I should not for thy benefits, at the least, love thee again, truly I were to be accounted ungrate and unkind. What benefits hadst thou ever, that thou usest to give and bestow upon thy best beloved children, that thou thoughtest too good for me ? Thou didst bestow on me all thy school degrees : of thy common offices, the chaplainship of the University, the office of the proctorship, and of a common reader ; and of thy private commodities, and emoluments in colleges, what was it that thou madest me not partner of ? First, to be scholar, then fellow, and after my departure from thee thou calledst me again to a Mastership of a right worshipful college. I thank thee, my loving mother, for all this thy kindness ; and I pray God that His laws, and the sincere Gospel of Christ, may ever be truly taught and faithfully learned in thee.

Farewell, Pembroke Hall, of late mine own college, my cure and my charge ! what case thou art in now, God knoweth, I know not well. Thou wast ever named since I knew thee (which is now thirty years ago) to be studious, well-learned, and a great setter-forth of Christ's Gospel, and of God's true Word : so I found thee, and, blessed be God, so I left thee indeed. Woe is me for thee, mine own dear college, if ever thou suffer thyself by

any means to be brought from that trade. In thy orchard (the walls, butts, and trees, if they could speak, would bear me witness) I learned without book almost all Paul's Epistles, yea, and, I ween, all the canonical Epistles, save only the Apocalypse. Of which study, although in time a great part did depart from me, yet the sweet smell thereof, I trust, I shall carry with me into heaven: for the profit thereof I think I have felt in all my lifetime ever after; and I ween, of late (whether they abide there now or no I cannot tell) there was that did the like. The Lord grant, that this zeal and love toward that part of God's Word, which is a key and a true commentary to all Holy Scripture, may ever abide in that college so long as the world shall endure.

From Cambridge I was called into Kent by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, that most reverend father and man of God, and of him by-and-by sent to be vicar of Herne in East Kent. Wherefore, farewell, Herne, thou worshipful and wealthy parish! the first cure whereunto I was called to minister God's Word. Thou hast heard of my mouth oftentimes the Word of God preached, not after the popish trade, but after the Christ's Gospel; oh that the fruit had answered to the seed! And yet I must acknowledge me to be thy debtor for the doctrine of the Lord's Supper; which at that time, I acknowledge, God had not revealed unto me: but I bless God in* all that godly virtue and zeal of

* On account of.

God's Word, which the Lord by preaching of His Word did kindle, manifestly both in the heart and in the life and works of that godly woman there, my lady Phines. The Lord grant that His Word took like effect there in many other more.

Farewell, thou cathedral church of Canterbury, the metropolitick see, whereof once I was a member ! To speak things pleasant unto thee I dare not, for danger of conscience and displeasure of my Lord God ; and to say what lieth in my heart, were now too much, and I fear were able to do thee now but little good. Nevertheless, for the friendship I have found in some there, and for charity's sake, I wish thee to be washed clean of all worldliness and ungodliness, that thou mayest be found of God (after thy name) Christ's Church in deed and in truth.

Farewell, Rochester, sometime my cathedral see ! in whom (to say the truth) I did find much gentleness and obedience ; and I trust thou wilt not say the contrary, but I did use it to God's glory, and thine own profit in God. Oh that thou hadst and mightest have continued and gone forward in the trade* of God's law, wherein I did leave thee ! then thy charge and burden should not have been so terrible and dangerous, as I suppose verily it is like to be (alas !) on the latter day.

To Westminster, other advertisement† in God I have not now to say, than I have said before to the cathedral

* Practice.

† Admonition.

church of Canterbury ; and so God give thee of His grace, that thou mayest learn in deed and in truth to please Him, after His own laws. And thus fare you well.

Oh, London, London ! to whom now may I speak in thee, or whom shall I bid farewell ? Shall I speak to the prebendaries of Paul's ? Alas ! all that loved God's Word, and were true setters-forth thereof, are now (as I hear say) some burnt and slain, some exiled and banished, and some holden in hard prisons, and appointed daily to be put to most cruel death, for Christ's Gospel's sake. As for the rest of them, I know they could never brook me well, nor I could never delight in them. Shall I speak to the see thereof, wherein of late I was placed, almost, and not fully, by the space of three years ? But what may I say to it, being (as I hear say I am) deposed and expelled by judgment, as an unjust usurper of that room ?* Oh, judgment, judgment ! Can this be just judgment to condemn the chief minister of God's Word, the pastor and bishop of the diocese, and never bring him into judgment, that he might have heard what crimes were laid to his charge, nor never suffer him to have any place or time to answer for himself ? Thinkest thou that hereafter, when true justice shall have place, that this judgment can be allowed either of God or of man ? Well, as for the cause and whole matter of my deposition, and the spoil of my goods which thou possessest

* Place.

yet, I refer it unto God, which is a just Judge ; and I beseech God, if it be His pleasure, that that which is but my personal wrong be not laid to thy charge in the latter day—this only can I pray for.

O thou now wicked and bloody see, why dost thou set up again many altars of idolatry, which by the Word of God were justly taken away? Oh, why hast thou overthrown the Lord's Table? Why dost thou daily delude the people, masking in thy masses, in the stead of the Lord's Holy Supper, which ought to be common as well (saith Chrysostom, yea, the Lord Himself) to the people as to the priest? How darest thou deny to the people of Christ, contrary to His express commandment in the Gospel, His holy cup? Why babblest thou to the people the common prayer in a strange tongue? wherein St. Paul commandeth, in the Lord's name, that no man should speak before the congregation, except it should be by-and-by declared in their common tongue that all might be edified. Nay, hearken, thou whorish bawd of Babylon, thou wicked limb of Antichrist, thou bloody wolf ; why slayest thou down and makest havoc of the prophets of God? Why murderest thou so cruelly Christ's poor seely* sheep, which will not hear thy voice because thou art a stranger, and will follow none other but their own pastor Christ His voice? Thinkest thou to escape, or that the Lord will not require the blood of His saints at thy hands? Thy god, which is

* Simple.

the work of thy hands, and whom thou sayest thou hast power to make—thy deaf and dumb god (I say) will not indeed nor cannot (although thou art not ashamed to call him thy maker), make thee to escape the revenging hand of the high and almighty God. But be thou assured, that the living Lord our Saviour and Redeemer, which sitteth now on the right hand of His Father in glory—He seeth all thy wicked ways and cruelty done to His dear members, and He will not forget His holy ones; and His hands (O thou whorish drab) shalt thou never escape. Instead of my farewell to thee, now I say, “Fie upon thee, fie upon thee, filthy drab, and all thy false prophets.”

Yet, O thou London, I may not leave thee thus. Although thy episcopal see, now being joined in league with the seat of Satan, thus hath now both handled me and the saints of God, yet I do not doubt but in that great city there be many privy mourners which do daily mourn for that mischief; the which never did, nor shall, consent to that wickedness, but do detest and abhor it as the ways of Satan. But these privy mourners here I will pass by, and bid them farewell with their fellows hereafter, when the place and occasion shall more conveniently require. Among the worshipful of the city, and especially which were in office of the mayoralty, (yea, and in other citizens also whom to name now it shall not be necessary,) in the time of my ministry, which was from the latter part of Sir Rowland Hill's year unto Sir George Barnes's year, and a great part thereof, I do

acknowledge that I found no small humanity and gentleness, as methought : but (to say the truth) that I do esteem above all other for true Christian kindness, which is showed in God's cause, and done for His sake. Wherefore, O Dobbes, Dobbes, alderman and knight, thou in thy year didst win my heart for evermore, for that honourable act, that most blessed work of God, of the erection and setting up of Christ's holy hospitals and truly religious houses, which by thee, and through thee, were begun. For thou, like a man of God, when the matter was moved for the relief of Christ's poor seely* members, to be holpen from extreme misery, hunger, and famine, thy heart (I say) was moved with pity : and as Christ's high honourable officer in that cause, thou calledst together thy brethren, the aldermen of the city, before whom thou brakest the matter for the poor, thou didst plead their cause, yea, and not only in thine own person thou didst set forth Christ's cause, but to further the matter, thou broughtest me into the council chamber of the city, before the aldermen alone, whom thou hadst assembled there together to hear me speak what I could say, as an advocate by office and duty in the poor men's cause. The Lord wrought with thee, and gave thee the consent of thy brethren, whereby the matter was brought to the common council, and so to the whole body of the city, by whom, with an uniform consent, it was committed to be drawn, ordered, and devised by a certain number of the most witty† citizens and politic,

* Simple.

† Wise.

endued also with godliness, and with ready hearts to set forward such a noble act, as could be chosen in all the whole city: and they, like true and faithful ministers both to their city and their Master Christ, so ordered, devised, and brought forth the matter, that thousands of seely* poor members of Christ, which else from extreme hunger and misery should have famished and perished, shall be relieved, holpen, and brought up, and shall have cause to bless the aldermen of that time, the common council, and the whole body of the city, but specially thee, O Dobbes, and those chosen men by whom this honourable work of God was begun and wrought; and that, so long through all ages as that godly work shall endure, which I pray Almighty God may be ever unto the world's end. Amen.

And thou, O Sir George Barnes (the truth it is to be confessed to God's glory and to the good example of other), thou wast in thy year not only a furtherer and continuer of that which, before thee, by thy predecessor was well begun, but also didst labour so to have perfected the work, that it should have been an absolute† thing, and a perfect spectacle of true charity and godliness unto all Christendom. Thine endeavour was to have set up an house of occupations: both that all kind of poverty, being able to work, should not have lacked whereupon profitably they might have been occupied to their own relief, and to the profit and

* Simple.

† Complete.

commodity of the commonwealth of the city; and also to have retired * thither the poor babes brought up in the hospitals, when they had come to a certain age and strength, and also all those which in the hospitals aforesaid had been cured of their diseases. And to have brought this to pass, thou obtainedst (not without great diligence and labour both of thee and thy brethren) of that godly King Edward, that Christian and peerless prince's hand, his princely place of Bridewell; and what other things, to the performance of the same, and under what condition, is not unknown. That this thine endeavour hath not had like success, the fault is not in thee, but in the condition and state of the time; which the Lord of His infinite mercy vouchsafe to amend, when it shall be His gracious will and pleasure.

Farewell now, all ye citizens that be of God, of what state and condition soever you be! Undoubtedly in London you have heard God's Word truly preached. My heart's desire and daily prayer shall be for you (as for whom, for my time, I know to my Lord God I am accountable) that ye never swerve, neither for loss of life nor worldly goods, from God's Holy Word, and yield unto Antichrist; whereupon must needs follow the extreme displeasure of God, and the loss both of your bodies and souls into perpetual damnation for evermore.

Now that I have gone through the places, where I

* Brought.

have dwelt any space in the time of my pilgrimage here upon earth, remembering that for the space of King Edward's reign, which was for the time of mine office in the sees of London and Rochester, I was a member of the higher house of the parliament ; therefore (seeing my God hath given me leisure and the remembrance thereof) I will bid my lords of the temporality farewell. They shall have no just cause (by God's grace) to take it, that I intend to say, in ill part. As for the spiritual prelacy that now is, I have nothing to say to them, except I should repeat again a great part of that I have said before now already to the see of London. To you therefore, my lords of the temporality, will I speak : and this would I have you first to understand ; that when I wrote this, I looked daily when I should be called to the change of this life, and thought that this my writing should not come to your knowledge, before the time of the dissolution of my body and soul should be expired. And therefore know ye, that I had before mine eyes only the fear of God, and Christian charity towards you, which moved me to write : for of you hereafter I look not, in this world, either for pleasure or displeasure. If my talk shall do you never so much pleasure or profit, you cannot promote me ; nor if I displease you, you cannot hurt or harm me, for I shall be out of your reach. Now, therefore, if you fear God, and can be content to hear the talk of him that seeketh nothing at your hands, but to serve God and to do you good, hearken to what I say.

I say unto you, as St. Paul saith unto the Galatians, I wonder (my lords) what hath bewitched you, that ye so suddenly are fallen from Christ unto Antichrist, from Christ's Gospel unto men's traditions, from the Lord that bought you unto the bishop now of Rome.

I warn you of your peril, be not deceived ; except you will be found willingly consenters to your own death. For if ye think thus—We are laymen ; this is a matter of religion ; we follow as we are taught and led ; if our teachers and governors teach us and lead us amiss, the fault is in them, they shall bear the blame : my lords, this is true (I grant you) that both the false teacher, and the corrupt governor, shall be punished for the death of their subject, whom they have falsely taught and corruptly led, yea and his blood shall be required at their hands : but yet nevertheless shall that subject die the death himself also, that is, he shall also be damned for his own sin ; for if the blind lead the blind, Christ saith, not the leader only, but (He saith) both shall fall in the ditch. Shall the synagogue and the senate of the Jews, trow ye, which forsook Christ and consented to His death, therefore, be excused, because Annas and Caiaphas, with the Scribes and Pharisees and their clergy, did teach them amiss ? yea and also Pilate, their governor and the emperor's lieutenant, by his tyranny did without cause put Him to death ? Forsooth no, my lords, no : for notwithstanding that corrupt doctrine, or Pilate's washing of his hands, neither of both shall excuse either that synagogue and seigniory,

or Pilate; but at the Lord's hand, for the effusion of that Innocent's blood, on the latter day all shall drink of the deadly whip—ye are witty, and understand what I mean. Therefore I will pass over this, and return to tell you how ye are fallen from Christ, to His adversary the Bishop of Rome.

And lest, my lords, ye may peradventure think, thus barely to call the Bishop of Rome, Christ's adversary, or (to speak it in plain terms) to call him Antichrist, that it is done in mine anguish, and that I do but rage, and as a desperate man do not care what I say, or upon whom I do rail: therefore, that your lordships may perceive my mind, and thereby understand that I speak the words of truth and of sobriety (as St. Paul said unto Festus), be it known unto your lordships all, that as concerning the Bishop of Rome, I neither hate the person nor the place.

For I ensure * your lordships (the living Lord beareth me witness, before whom I speak), I do think many a good holy man, many martyrs and saints of God, have sat and taught in that place Christ's Gospel truly; which therefore justly may be called Apostolici, that is, true disciples of the apostles, and also of that church and congregation of Christians, apostolic church, yea and that certain hundred years after the same was first erected and builded upon Christ, by the true apostolical doctrine taught by the mouths of the apostles themselves.

* Assure.

If ye will know how long that was, and how many hundred of years, to be curious in pointing the precise number of years I will not be too bold : but thus I say, so long and so many hundred years as that see did truly teach and preach that Gospel, that religion, exercised that power, and ordered everything by those laws and rules, which that see received of the apostles, and (as Tertullian saith) the apostles of Christ, and Christ of God ; so long (I say) that see might well have been called Peter and Paul's chair and see, or rather Christ's chair, and the bishop thereof Apostolicus, or a true disciple and successor of the apostles, and a minister of Christ. But since the time that that see hath degenerated from the trade* of truth and true religion, the which it received of the apostles at the beginning ; and hath preached another Gospel, hath set up another religion, hath exercised another power, and hath taken upon it to order and rule the Church of Christ by other strange laws, canons, and rules, than ever it received of the apostles, or the apostles of Christ, which things it doth at this day and hath continued so doing (alas, alas !) of too, too long a time—since the time (I say) that the state and condition of that see hath thus been changed ; in truth it ought, of duty and of right, to have the names changed, both of the see and of the sitter therein. For understand, my lords, it was neither for the privilege of the place or person thereof, that that see and bishop thereof

* Practice.

were called apostolic ; but for the true trade of Christ's religion, which was taught and maintained in that see at the first, and of those godly men. And therefore as truly and justly as that see then, for that true trade of religion and consanguinity of doctrine with the religion and doctrine of Christ's apostles, was called apostolic : so as truly and as justly, for the contrariety of religion and diversity of doctrine from Christ and His apostles, that see and the bishop thereof at this day both ought to be called, and are indeed, Antichristian. .

The see is the seat of Satan ; and the bishop of the same, that maintaineth the abominations thereof, is Antichrist himself indeed. And for the same causes this see at this day is the same which St. John calleth in his Revelation, Babylon, or the whore of Babylon, and spiritually Sodoma and Egyptus, the mother of fornications, and of the abominations upon the earth. And with this whore doth spiritually mell,* and lieth with her and committeth most stinking and abominable adultery before God, all those kings and princes, yea and all nations of the earth, which do consent to her abominations, and use or practise the same : that is (of the innumerable multitude of them to rehearse some for example sake) her dispensations, her pardons and pilgrimages, her invocation of saints, her worshipping of images, her false counterfeit religion in her monkery and friarage, and her traditions, whereby God's laws are

* Meddle.

defiled ; as her massing, and false ministering of God's Word and the sacraments of Christ, clean contrary to Christ's Word and the apostles' doctrine, whereof in particularity I have touched something before in my talk had with the see of London, and in other treatises more at large : wherein (if it shall please God to bring the same to light) it shall appear I trust by God's grace plainly to the man of God, and to him whose rule in judgment of religion is God's Word, that that religion, that rule and order, that doctrine and faith, which this whore of Babylon and the beast whereupon she doth sit maintaineth at this day with all violence of fire and sword, with spoil and banishment (according to Daniel's prophecy), and finally with all falsehood, deceit, hypocrisy, and all kind of ungodliness—are as clean contrary to God's Word as darkness is unto light, or light to darkness, white to black, or black to white, or as Belial unto Christ, or Christ unto Antichrist himself.

I know, my lords, and foresaw when I wrote this, that so many of you as should see this my writing, not being before endued with the Spirit of grace and the light of God's Word, so many (I say) would at these my words lordlike stamp and spurn, and spit thereat. But sober yourselves with patience, and be still ; and know ye that in my writing of this, my mind was none other but in God (as the living God doth bear me witness) both to do you profit and pleasure. And otherwise, as for your displeasure, by that time this shall come to your knowledge, I trust by God's grace to be in the hands and

protection of the Almighty, my heavenly Father and the living Lord, which is (as St. John saith) the greatest of all ; and then I shall not need (I trow) to fear what any lord, no nor what king or prince, can do unto me.

My lords, if in times past ye have been contented to hear me sometimes in matters of religion before the prince in the pulpit, and in the parliament house, and have not seemed to have despised what I have said : when as* else if ye had perceived just occasion, ye might then have suspected in my talk, though it had been reasonable, either desire of worldly gain or fear of displeasure : how hath then your lordships more cause to hearken to my word, and to hear me patiently, seeing now ye cannot justly think of me (being in this case, appointed to die, and looking daily when I shall be called to come before the eternal Judge) otherwise, but that I only study to serve my Lord God, and to say that thing which I am persuaded assuredly by God's Word shall and doth please Him, and profit all them to whom God shall give grace to hear and believe what I do say ! And I do say even that I have said heretofore, both of the see of Rome and of the bishop thereof—I mean after this their present state at this day. Wherein if ye will not believe the ministers of God, and true preachers of His Word, verily I denounce unto you *in verbo Domini*, Except ye do repent betime, it shall turn to your confusion and to your smart on the latter day. Forget not what I say, my

* When.

lords, for God's sake forget not, but remember it upon your bed. For I tell you moreover, as I know I must be countable of this my talk, and of my speaking thus, to the Eternal Judge (who will judge nothing amiss), so shall you be countable of your duty in hearing; and you shall be charged, if ye will hearken to God's Word, for not obeying to the truth.

Alas, my lords, how chanceth this, that this matter is now anew again to be persuaded unto you? Who would have thought of late, but your lordships had been persuaded indeed sufficiently, or else that ye could ever have agreed so uniformly with one consent to the abolishment of the usurpation of the Bishop of Rome? If that matter were then but a matter of policy, wherein the prince must be obeyed, how is it now made a matter wherein (as your clergy saith now, and so say the pope's laws indeed) standeth the unity of the Catholic Church, and a matter of necessity of our salvation? Hath the time, being so short since the death of the two last kings, Henry VIII. and Edward his son, altered the nature of the matter? If it have not, but was of the same nature and danger before God then as it is now, and be now (as it is said by the pope's laws, and the instructions set forth in English to the curates of the diocese of York,) indeed a matter of necessity to salvation, how then chanced it that ye were all, O my lords, so light and so little passed upon* the Catholic faith and the unity thereof (without

* Concerned for.

the which no man can be saved), as for your princes' pleasures, which were but mortal men, to forsake the unity of your Catholic faith, that is, to forsake Christ and His holy Gospel? And furthermore, if it were both then and now so necessary to salvation, how chanced it also, that ye, all the whole body of the parliament agreeing with you, did not only abolish and expel the Bishop of Rome, but also did abjure him in your own persons, and did decree in your acts great oaths to be taken of both the spirituality and temporalty, whosoever should enter into any weighty and chargeable office in the commonwealth? But on the other side, if that law and decree, which maketh the supremacy of the see and Bishop of Rome over the universal Church of Christ a thing of necessity required unto salvation, be an Antichristian law (as it is indeed), and such instructions as are given to the diocese of York be indeed a setting-forth of the power of that beast of Babylon, by the craft and falsehood of his false prophets (as of truth, compared unto God's Word, and truly judged by the same, it shall plainly appear that they be), then, my lords, never think other, but the day shall come, when ye shall be charged with this your undoing of that, that once ye had well done, and with this your perjury and breach of your oath, which oath was done in judgment, justice, and truth, agreeable to God's law.

The whore of Babylon may well for a time dally with you, and make you so drunk with the wine of her filthy stews and whoredom (as with her dispensations and

promises of pardon *a pœna et culpa*), that for drunkenness and blindness ye may think yourselves safe. But be ye assured, when the living Lord shall try the matter by fire, and judge it according to His Word, when all her abominations shall appear what they be, then ye, my lords (I give your lordships warning in time, repent if ye be happy, and love your own souls' health,—repent I say, or else without all doubt ye shall never escape the hands of the living Lord for the guilt of your perjury and the breach of your oath): as ye have banqueted and lain by the whore in the fornication of her whorish dispensations, pardons, idolatry, and such like abominations; so shall ye drink with her (except ye repent betime) of the cup of the Lord's indignation and everlasting wrath, which is prepared for the beast, his false prophets, and all their partakers. For he that is partner with them in their whoredom and abominations must also be partner with them of their plagues, and on the latter day shall be throwp with them into the lake burning with brimstone and unquenchable fire. Thus fare ye well, my lords all. I pray God give you understanding of His blessed will and pleasure, and make you to believe and embrace the truth. Amen.

John Hooper.

JOHN HOOPER, Bishop of Gloucester, was a student and graduate of Oxford. Being already known as an earnest student of theology, at the time of the passing of the Six Articles, he soon drew upon himself the displeasure of certain Oxford doctors, and was expelled the University. He became steward to Sir Thomas Arundel, by whom he was held in great regard, but his master was much displeased on becoming aware of Hooper's religious views, and sent him to the Bishop of Winchester to be convinced of his errors. The bishop failed in his efforts, and returned him to his master with much praise of his servant's wit and learning, but harbouring evil thoughts in his heart against him. Hooper soon was warned of harm being intended him, and fled to France; not to remain there long, however. England could offer him no safe asylum for any lengthened period, and he soon had to make his escape a second time; he assumed the character of a sea captain, crossed over to France, and thence into Germany. At Zurich he not only won many friends, but married. On the accession of Edward VI., and the close of the persecutions arising from the Six Articles, Hooper bid adieu to his Zurich friends, and returned to his native land, to be, not long afterwards, created Bishop of Gloucester. He became beloved for his piety and earnest work amongst the people, but almost immediately on Mary's mounting the throne he was summoned before the Queen and Council. By them he was kept in prison until March 19th, 1554, on which day he underwent a fresh examination before the Bishop of Winchester and a commission; they deprived Hooper of his bishopric and committed him to the Fleet. There they handled him most cruelly for nearly eighteen months, when on January 22nd, 1555, he was examined

for a third time, and earnestly exhorted to forsake his evil ways ; Hooper, however, remained true to himself, and so was again carried to the Fleet. On January 28th he was once more brought up before his judges, then sitting at the Church of St. Mary Overy, a Rev. Mr. Rogers being also examined at the same time. On the conclusion of their examination, both prisoners were sent to the Compter in Southwark. Outside the church Hooper waited until Rogers should join him, and then asked, "Come, Brother Rogers, must we two take this matter first in hand, and begin to fry these faggots?" "Yes, sir, by God's grace," answered Rogers. "Doubt not but God will give strength," added Hooper. The following day the commissioners again questioned them in the church, but seeing they could not be moved, handed them over to the secular powers, to be cast into the Clink, a prison in Southwark. At nightfall Hooper was removed to Newgate, where, on the following morning, Bonner, Bishop of London, with much ceremony degraded him. He was next conducted to Fleet Street, and there handed over to the Queen's Guard, and taken by them to Gloucester for execution, where he was met by a mourning multitude. On Friday, February 4th, 1555, John Hooper was led to the stake : he himself aided to kindle the flames, but the wind was in the wrong direction, and the fire would not burn ; three times it had to be relighted, and not until almost every limb had perished singly did the brave bishop die. He had protested against being bound, saying that "God would give him strength sufficient to abide the extremity of the fire." At the last moment a pardon had been laid before him, on condition that he should recant, but he only cried, "If you love my soul, away with it."

TO ALL MY DEAR BRETHREN, MY RELIEVERS AND
HELPERS IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

THE grace of God be with you. Amen. I have received from you (dearly beloved in our Saviour Jesus Christ), by the hands of my servant, William Downton, your liberality ; for the which I do most heartily thank you ;

and I praise God highly in you and for you, who hath moved your hearts to show this kindness towards me, praying Him to preserve you from all famine, scarcity, and lack of the truth of His word, which is the lively food of your souls, as you preserve my body from hunger and other necessities, which should* happen unto me, were it not cared for by the benevolence and charity of godly people. Such as have taken all worldly goods and lands from me, and spoiled me of all that I had, have imprisoned my body, and appointed not one half-penny to feed or to relieve me withal. But I do forgive them, and pray for them daily in my poor prayer unto God, and from my heart I wish their salvation, and quietly and patiently bear their injuries, wishing no farther extremity to be used towards us. Yet if it seem contrary best unto our heavenly Father, I have made my reckoning, and fully resolved myself to suffer the uttermost that they are able to do against me, yea, death itself, by the aid of Christ Jesus, who died the most vile death of the cross for us wretches and miserable sinners. But of this I am assured, that the wicked world, with all its force and power, shall not touch one of the hairs of our heads without leave and license of our heavenly Father, whose will be done in all things. If He will life, life be it; if He will death, death be it. Only we pray, that our wills may be subject unto His will; and then, although both we and all the world see none other thing but death, yet if He think life best, we shall not

* Would.

die, no, although the sword be drawn out over our heads ; as Abraham thought to kill his son Isaac, yet when God perceived that Abraham had surrendered his will to God's will, and was content to kill his son, God then saved his son.

Dearly beloved, if we be contented to obey God's will, and for His commandments' sake to surrender our goods and ourselves to be at His pleasure, it maketh no matter whether we keep goods and life or lose them. Nothing can hurt us, that is taken from us for God's cause ; nor nothing can at length do us good, that is preserved contrary unto God's commandment. Let us wholly suffer God to use us and ours after His holy wisdom ; and beware we neither use nor govern ourselves contrary to His will by our own wisdom, for if we do, our wisdom will at length prove foolishness. It is kept to no good purpose, that we keep contrary unto His commandments. It can by no means be taken from us, that He would should tarry with us. He is no good Christian that ruleth himself and his, as worldly means serveth ; for he that so doth shall have as many changes as chanceth in the world. To-day, with the world, he shall like and praise the truth of God ; to-morrow, as the world will, so will he like and praise the falsehood of man ; to-day with Christ, and to-morrow with Antichrist.

Wherefore, dear brethren, as touching your behaviour towards God, use both your inward spirits and your outward bodies, your inward and your outward man, I say, not after the means of men, but after the infallible

Word of God. Refrain from evil in both, and glorify your heavenly Father in both. For if ye think ye can inwardly in the heart serve Him, and yet outwardly serve with the world in external service the thing that is not God, ye deceive yourselves; for both the body and the soul must together concur in the honour of God, as St. Paul plainly teacheth, 1 Cor. vi. For if an honest wife be bound to give both heart and body to faith* and service in marriage, and if an honest wife's faith in the heart cannot stand with† an whorish or defiled body outwardly, much less can the true faith of a Christian in the service of Christianity stand with the bodily service of external idolatry: for the mystery of marriage is not so honourable between man and wife as it is between Christ and every Christian man, as St. Paul saith. Therefore, dear brethren, pray to the heavenly Father, that as He spared not the soul nor the body of His dearly beloved Son, but applied both of them with extreme pain to work our salvation both of body and soul, so He will give us all grace to apply our bodies and souls to be servants unto Him; for doubtless He requireth as well the one as the other, and cannot be miscontented with one, and well pleased with the other. Either He hateth both, or loveth both; He divideth not His love to one and His hatred to the other. Let not us therefore, good brethren, divide ourselves, and say our souls serve Him, whatsoever our bodies do to the contrary for civil order and policy. But (alas!) I know

* Fidelity.

† Consist with.

by myself what troubleth you ; that is, the great danger of the world, that will revenge (ye think) your service to God, with sword and fire, with loss of goods and lands. But, dear brethren, weigh of the other side, that your enemies and God's enemies shall not do as much as they would, but as much as God shall suffer them, who can trap them in their own counsels, and destroy them in the midst of their furies. Remember, ye be the workmen of the Lord, and called into His vineyard, there to labour till evening tide, that you may receive your penny, which is more worth than all the kings of the earth. But He that calleth us into His vineyard, hath not told us how sore or how fervently the sun shall trouble us in our labour ; but hath bid us labour and commit the bitterness thereof unto Him, who can and will so moderate all afflictions, that no man shall have more laid upon him, than in Christ he shall be able to bear : unto whose merciful tuition* and defence I commend both your souls and your bodies.

Yours, with my poor prayer,

JOHN HOOPER.

September 1st, 1554.

A REPORT OF HIS MISERABLE IMPRISONMENT,
And most cruel handling by Babington, that enemy
of God and of His truth, then Warden of the Fleet.
THE 1st of September, 1553, I was committed unto
the Fleet from Richmond, to have the liberty of the

* Protection.

prison ; and, within six days after, I paid for my liberty five pounds sterling to the warden for fees, who, immediately upon the payment thereof, complained unto Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, and so was I committed to close prison one-quarter of a year, in the Tower chamber of the Fleet, and used very extremely. Then, by the means of a good gentlewoman, I had liberty to come down to dinner and supper, and not to speak with any of my friends ; but as soon as dinner and supper were done, to repair to my chamber again. Notwithstanding, whilst I came down thus to dinner and supper, the warden and his wife picked quarrels with me, and complained untruly of me to their great friend, the Bishop of Winchester.

After one-quarter of a year, and somewhat more, the warden and his wife fell out with me, for the wicked mass : and thereupon the warden resorted to the Bishop of Winchester, and obtained to put me into the wards, where I have continued a long time, having nothing appointed to me for my bed, but a little pad of straw, a rotten covering, with a tick and a few feathers therein, the chamber being vile and stinking, until, by God's means, good people sent me bedding to lie in ; of* the one side of which prison is the sink and filth of all the house, and on the other side the town ditch ; so that the stench of the house hath infected me with sundry diseases. During which time I have been sick ; and the doors, bars, hasps, and chains being all closed

* On.

and made fast upon me, I have mourned, called, and cried for help: but the warden, when he hath known me many times ready to die, and when the poor men of the wards have called to help me, hath commanded the doors to be kept fast, and charged that none of his men should come at me, saying, "Let him alone, it were a good riddance of him."

And, among many other times, he did thus the 18th of October, 1553, as many can witness. I paid always like a baron to the said warden, as well in fees, as for my board, which was twenty shillings a week, besides my man's table, until I was wrongfully deprived of my bishopric. And since that time I have paid him as the best gentleman doth in his house; yet hath he used me worse and more vile, than the veriest slave that ever came to the hall commons. The same warden hath also imprisoned my man William Downton, and stripped him out of his clothes to search for letters, and could find none, but only a little remembrance of good people's names, that gave me their alms to relieve me in prison. And to undo them also, the warden delivered the same bill unto the said Stephen Gardiner, God's enemy and mine.

I have suffered imprisonment almost eighteen months, my goods, living, friends, and comfort taken from me, the queen owing me by just account fourscore pounds or more. She hath put me in prison, and giveth nothing to find * me, neither is there suffered any to come at me, whereby I might have relief. I am with a wicked

* Support.

man and woman, so that I see no remedy (saving God's help) but I shall be cast away in prison, before I can come to judgment. But I commit my just cause to God; whose will be done, whether it be by life or death.

JOHN HOOPER.

TO ONE THAT WAS FALLEN FROM THE KNOWN TRUTH
OF THE GOSPEL, TO ANTICHRIST AND HIS DAM-
NABLE RELIGION.

GRACE, mercy, and peace of conscience, be multiplied in all penitent hearts. Amen: Dear brother in Christ Jesus, it is not long since I was informed what love and fervent zeal ye have heretofore borne to God's true religion; appearing as well by your life and conversation, as by absenting yourself from the idolaters' temple, and congregation of false worshippers. But now (alas!), through the devilish persuasions and wicked counsel of worldly men, ye have declined from your former profession, building again that which before ye destroyed, and so are become a trespasser, bearing a stranger's yoke with the unbelievers. Of which thing ever since I was informed, I have been marvellously moved with inward affections, much lamenting so great and sudden a change, as to be turned from him who called you in the grace of Christ, unto the dissimulation of wicked hypocrites; which (as St. Paul saith) is nothing else, but that there be some which trouble you, intending to make you like as they are, even lovers of

themselves, whose hearts are wedded to the perishing treasures of this world, wherein is their whole joy and felicity; contrary to St. John, which saith, "See that ye love not the world, neither those things which are in the world." But they, as men without ears, and having hearts without understanding, do neither weigh the terrible threatenings of God against such offenders, and the most woeful punishment due for the same, nor yet consider the loving admonition and calling of God, who both teacheth how to avoid His wrath, and also by what means to attain to salvation. Wherefore, dear brother, I humbly beseech you, even by the mercifulness of God, and as you tender your own salvation, to give ear no longer to their pestilent persuasions, but even now forthwith to repent, and have no longer fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness: neither fashion you yourself again like unto the world, delight not in the friendship thereof, for all such be made the enemies of God: grieve not any longer the Holy Spirit of God, by whom ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Acknowledge your offence, and from whence ye are fallen: prostrate yourself before God, asking mercy for Christ's sake. Mourn with Mary Magdalene, lament with David, cry with Jonas, and weep with Peter; and make no tarrying to turn to the Lord, whose pitiful eyes attend always to wipe away the tears from every troubled conscience.

Such is His entire love towards all those that turn unto Him, making them this sweet promise, confirmed by a

mighty and vehement kind of speaking : Tell them, as truly as I live (saith He), I will not the death of a sinner, but much rather that he turn from his evil ways and live. Turn you, turn you from your ungodly ways, O ye of the house of Israel. Oh wherefore will ye die? Behold ye are here forgiven, your sin is blotted out, and the most joyful countenance of God turned again towards you. What now remaineth? Verily this—that you from henceforth keep circumspect watch, and become a follower of Christ, sustaining for His name's sake all such adversities as shall be measured unto you by the sufferance of God our heavenly Father; who so careth for us, that not one hair of our head shall perish without His will; who also, considering the tender and weak faith of His children, not able as yet to stand against the force of Antichrist's tyranny, giveth them this loving liberty, When ye be persecuted in one city, fly to another.

Oh most tender compassion of Christ! how careful is He over His people! Who would not now, rather than to offend so merciful a God, fly this wicked realm, as your most Christian brother and many others have done? or else, with boldness of heart and patience of the spirit, bear manfully the cross even unto the death, as divers of our brethren have done before us? as is declared at large in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews—which I pass over, and come to our Saviour Christ, whose example, for our singular comfort, St. Paul encourageth us to follow, saying: Let us also, seeing that we are compassed with so great a multitude of witnesses, lay away all that presseth

down, and the sin that hangeth on, and let us run with patience unto the battle that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith ; who for the joy that was set before Him abode the cross and despised the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the throne of God, etc. From whence He shall come shortly, saith St. John, and His rewards with Him, to give every man according as his deeds shall be. Blessed are they that do His commandments, that their power may be in the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates unto the city, where they (saith Esay) shall have their pleasure in the Lord, who will carry them on high above the earth, and will feed them with the heritage of Jacob their father, for the Lord's own mouth hath so promised.

Thus I have been bold to write unto you, for Christian love's sake that I bear to you, whose salvation I wish as mine own, beseeching God that your whole spirit, soul, and body may be kept faultless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Your brother in Christ,
JOHN HOOPER.

AN EXHORTATION TO PATIENCE,

Sent to his godly wife, Ann Hooper : whereby all the true Members of Christ may take comfort and courage, to suffer trouble and affliction for the profession of His holy Gospel.

OUR Saviour Jesus Christ (dearly beloved, and my godly wife) in St. Matthew's Gospel said to His disciples,

that it was necessary slanderers should come ; and that they could not be avoided, He perceived as well by the condition of those that should perish and be lost for ever in the world to come, as also by their affliction that should be saved. For He saw the greatest part of the people would contemn and neglect whatsoever true doctrine or godly ways should be showed unto them, or else receive it and use it as they thought good, to serve their pleasures, without any profit to their souls at all, not caring whether they lived as they were commanded by God's Word or not ; but would think it sufficient to be counted to have the name of a Christian man, with such works and fruits of his profession and Christianity, as his fathers and elders, after their custom and manner, esteem and take to be good fruits and faithful works, and will not try them by the Word of God at all. These men, by the just judgment of God, be delivered unto the craft and subtilty of the devil, that they may be kept, by one slanderous stumbling-block or other, that they never come unto Christ, who came to save those that were lost : as* ye may see how God delivereth wicked men up unto their own lusts, to do one mischief after another, careless, until they come into a reprobate mind, that forgetteth itself and cannot know what is expedient to be done or to be left undone : because they close their eyes, and will not see the light of God's Word offered unto them ; and being thus blinded, they prefer their own vanities before the truth of God's Word. Whereas† such corrupt

* So that.

† Where.



HOOPER.

minds be, there is also corrupt election and choice of God's honour : so that the mind of man taketh falsehood for truth, superstition for true religion, death for life, damnation for salvation, hell for heaven, and persecution of Christ's members for God's service and honour. And as these men wilfully and voluntarily reject the Word of God, even so God most justly delivereth them into the blindness of mind and hardness of heart, that they cannot understand nor yet consent to anything that God would have preached and set forth, to His glory, after His own will and Word : wherefore they hate it mortally, and of all things most detest God's holy Word. And as the devil hath entered into their hearts, that they themselves cannot nor will not come to Christ to be instructed by His holy Word ; even so can they not abide any other man to be a Christian man, and to lead his life after the Word of God, but hate him, persecute him, rob him, imprison him, yea, and kill him, whether he be man or woman, if God suffer it. And so much are those wicked men blinded, that they pass of* no law, whether it be God's or man's, but persecute such as never offended, yea, do evil to those that daily have prayed for them, and wish them God's grace. In their Pharaonical and blind fury, they have no respect to nature : for the brother persecuteth the brother, the father the son, and most dear friends, in devilish slander and offence, are become most mortal enemies. And no marvel ; for when

* Regard.

they have chosen sundry masters, the one the devil, the other God, the one shall agree with the other, as God and the devil agree between themselves. For this cause, that the more part of the world doth choose to serve the devil under cloaked hypocrisy of God's title, Christ saith, It is expedient and necessary that slanderers should come; and many means be devised to keep the little babes of Christ from the heavenly Father. But Christ saith, Woe be unto him by whom the offence cometh: yet is there no remedy, man being of such corruption and hatred towards God, but that the evil shall be deceived and persecute the good, and the good shall understand the truth and suffer persecution for it, until the world's end. For as he that was born after the flesh, persecuted in times past him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now.

Seeing therefore we live, for this life, amongst so many and great perils and dangers, we must be well assured by God's Word how to bear them, and how patiently to take them, as they be sent to us from God. We must also assure ourselves that there is no other remedy for Christians in the time of trouble than Christ Himself hath appointed us. In St. Luke, He giveth us this commandment: Ye shall possess your lives in patience, saith He. In the which words, He giveth us both commandment what to do, and also great consolation and comfort in all troubles. He showeth also what is to be done, and what is to be hoped for, in troubles: and when troubles happen, He biddeth us be patient, and in no case violently nor seditiously to

resist our persecutors, because God hath such care and charge of us, that He will keep in the midst of all troubles the very hairs of our head, so that one of them shall not fall away without the will and pleasure of our heavenly Father. Whether the hair, therefore, tarry in the head, or fall from the head, it is the will of the Father. And seeing He hath such care for the hairs of our head, how much more doth He care for our life itself! Wherefore let God's adversaries do what they lust: whether they take the life or take it not, they can do us no hurt, for their cruelty hath no further power than God permitteth them; and that which cometh unto us by the will of our heavenly Father can be no harm, no loss, neither destruction unto us, but rather gain, wealth, and felicity. For all troubles and adversity, that chance to such as be of God, by the will of the heavenly Father, can be none other but gain and advantage.

That the spirit of man may feel these consolations, the Giver of them (the heavenly Father) must be prayed unto, for the merits of Christ's passion: for it is not the nature of man that can be contented, until it be regenerated and possessed with God's Spirit, to bear patiently the troubles of the mind or of the body. When the mind and heart of a man seeth on every side sorrow and heaviness, and the worldly eye beholdeth nothing but such things as be troublous, and wholly bent to rob the poor man of that he hath, and also to take from him his life; except the man weigh these brittle and uncertain treasures that be taken from him with the riches of the

life to come, and this life of the body with the life in Christ's precious blood, and so for the love and certainty of the heavenly joys contemn all things present, doubtless he shall never be able to bear the loss of goods, life, or any other things of this world. Therefore St. Paul giveth a very godly and necessary lesson to all men in this short and transitory life, and therein sheweth how a man may best bear the iniquity* and troubles of this world: If ye be risen again with Christ, saith he, seek the things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God the Father.

Wherefore the Christian man's faith must be always upon the resurrection of Christ when he is in trouble: and in that glorious resurrection he shall not only see continual and perpetual joy and consolation, but also the victory and triumph of † all persecution, trouble, sin, death, hell, the devil, and all other persecutors, and tyrannies of Christ and of Christ's people; the tears and weepings of the faithful dried up, their wounds healed, their bodies made immortal in joy, their souls for ever praising the Lord, and conjunction and society everlasting with the blessed company of God's elect in perpetual joy. But the words of St. Paul in that place, if they be not marked, shall do little profit to the reader or hearer, and give him no patience at all in this impatient and cruel world.

In the first part, St. Paul commandeth us to think or

* Injustice.

† Over.

set our affections on things that are above. When he biddeth us seek the things that are above, he requireth that our minds never cease from prayer and study in God's Word, until we see, know, and understand the vanities of this world, the shortness and misery of this life, and the treasures of the world to come, the immortality thereof, and the joys of that life ; and so never cease seeking, until such time as we know certainly, and be persuaded what a blessed man he is that seeketh the one and findeth it, and careth not for the other though he lose it : and in seeking to have right judgment between the life present and the life to come, we shall find how little the pains, imprisonment, slanders, lies, and death itself, is in this world, in respect of the pains everlasting, the prison infernal, and dungeon of hell ; the sentence of God's just judgment, and everlasting death.

When a man hath, by seeking the Word of God, found out what the things above be, then must he (as St. Paul saith) set his affections upon them. And this commandment is more hard than the other. For man's knowledge many times seeth the best, and knoweth that there is a life to come better than this life present ; as you may see how daily men and women can praise and commend, yea, and wish for heaven and to be at rest there, yet they set not their affection upon it ; they do more affect and love in deed* a trifle of nothing in this world that pleaseth their affection, than a treasure of all treasures in heaven,

* In reality.

which, their own judgment saith, is better than all worldly things. Wherefore we must set our affections upon the things that be above: that is to say, when anything, worse than heaven, upon the earth offereth itself to be ours if we will give our good wills to it and love it in our hearts; then to see by the judgment of God's Word, whether we may have the world without offence of God, and such things as be for this worldly life without His displeasure. If we cannot, St. Paul's commandment must take place: set your affection on things that are above. If the riches of this world may not be gotten nor kept with God's law, neither our lives be continued without the denial of His honour, we must set our affections upon the riches and life that is above, and not upon things that be on the earth.

Therefore this second commandment of St. Paul's requireth, that as our minds judge heavenly things to be better than things upon the earth, and the life to come than the life present, so we should choose them before other, and prefer them, and have such affection to the best, that in no case we set the worst before it; as the most part of the world doth, and hath done, for they choose the best and approve it, and yet follow the worst.

But these things (my godly wife) require rather cogitation, meditation, and prayer, than words or talk. They be easy to be spoken of, but not so easy to be used and practised. Wherefore, seeing they be God's gifts, and none of ours, to have as our own when we would, we must seek them at our heavenly Father's hand; who

seeth and is privy how poor and wretched we be, and how naked, how spoiled and destitute of all His blessed gifts we be by reason of sin.

He did command therefore His disciples, when He showed them that they should take patiently the state of this present life, full of troubles and persecution, to pray that they might well escape those troubles that were to come, and be able to stand before the Son of man. When ye find yourself too much oppressed (as every man shall be sometime) with the fear of God's judgment, use the 77th Psalm, that beginneth—I will cry unto God with my voice, and He shall hearken unto me. In which psalm is both godly doctrine and great consolation unto that man or woman that is in anguish of mind. Use also in such troubles the 88th Psalm, wherein is contained the prayer of a man that was brought into extreme anguish and misery, and, being vexed with adversaries and persecutions, saw nothing but death and hell; and although he felt in himself, that he had not only man but also God angry towards him, yet he by prayer humbly resorted unto God as the only port of consolation, and, in the midst of his desperate state of trouble, put the hope of his salvation in Him whom he felt his enemy. Howbeit, no man of himself can do this; but the Spirit of God, that striketh the man's heart with fear, prayeth for the man stricken and feared with unspeakable groanings. And when you feel yourself, or know any other, oppressed after such sort, be glad: for after that God hath made you to know what you be of yourself, He will doubtless

show you comfort, and declare unto you what you be in Christ, His only Son : and use prayer often ; for that is the means whereby God will be sought unto for His gifts.

These psalms be for the purpose, when the mind can take no understanding, nor the heart any joy, of God's promises : and therefore were these psalms also made, vi., xxii., xxx., xxxi., xxxviii., lxix. ; from the which you shall learn both patience and consolation. Remember that although your life (as all Christian men's be) be hid, and appeareth not what it is, yet is it safe (as St. Paul saith) with God in Christ : and when Christ shall appear, then shall your lives be made open in Him with glory. But in the meantime, with seeking and setting our affections upon the things that be above, we must patiently suffer whatsoever God shall send unto us in this mortal life. Notwithstanding, it might fortune some would say, Who is so perfect, that can let all things pass as they come, and have no care of them ? suffer all things and feel nothing, be attempted* of the devil, the world, and the flesh, and not be troubled ? Verily, no man living. But this I say, that, in the strength of Jesus Christ, things that come may pass with care, for we be worldly ; and yet are we not carried with them from Christ, for we be in Him godly. We may suffer things, and feel them as mortal men ; yet bear them, and overcome them as Christian men. We may be attempted of the devil, the flesh, and the world ; but yet although these

* Tempted.

things pinch, they do not pierce ; and although they work sin in us, yet in Christ no damnation to those that be grafted in Him.

Hereof may the Christian man learn both consolation and patience. Consolation, in that he is compelled both in his body and goods to feel pain and loss, and in the soul heaviness and anguish of mind ; howbeit, none of them both shall separate him from the love that God beareth him in Christ. He may learn patience, forasmuch as his enemies both of the body and soul, and the pains also they vex us withal for the time, if they tarry with us as long as we live, yet when death cometh they shall avoid* and give place to such joys as be prepared for us in Christ : for no pains of the world be perpetual ; and whether they shall afflict us for all the time of our mortal life, we know not, for they be the servants of God, to go and to come as He commandeth them. But we must take heed we meddle not forcibly nor seditiously, to put away the persecution appointed unto us by God : but remember Christ's saying, Possess you your lives by your patience. And in this commandment God requireth in every man and woman this patient obedience. He saith not, It is sufficient that other holy patriarchs, prophets, apostles, evangelists, and martyrs, continued their lives in patience and patient suffering the troubles of this world ; but Christ saith to every one of His people, By your own patience ye shall continue your life : not

* Depart.

that man hath patience of himself, but that he must have it for himself of God, the only Giver of it, if he purpose to be a godly man. Now, therefore, as our profession and religion requireth patience outwardly, without resistance and force, so requireth it patience of the mind, and not to be angry with God, although He use us that be His own creatures as Him listeth. We may not also murmur against God, but say always His judgments be right and just, and rejoyce that it pleaseth Him by troubles to use us as He used heretofore such as He most loved in this world; and have a singular care to this commandment, *Gaudete et exultate*—Be glad and rejoyce—for He sheweth great cause why: your reward (saith He) is great in heaven.

These promises of Him that is the truth itself, shall (by God's grace) work both consolation and patience in the afflicted Christian person. And when our Saviour Christ hath willed men in trouble to be content and patient, because God in the end of trouble in Christ hath ordained eternal consolation, He useth also to take from us all shame and rebuke, as though it were not an honour to suffer for Christ, because the wicked world doth curse and abhor such poor troubled Christians. Wherefore Christ placeth all His honourably, and saith, Even so persecuted they the prophets that were before you. We may also see with whom the afflicted for Christ's sake be esteemed, by St. Paul to the Hebrews: whereas* the number of the blessed and

* Where.

glorious company of saints appear now to our faith in heaven in joy ; yet in the letter, for the time of this life, in such pains and contempt as was never more. Let us therefore consider both them and all other things of the world since the fall of man ; and we shall perceive nothing to come to perfection, but with such confusion and disorder to the eye of the world, as though things were rather lost for ever, than like to come to any perfection at all. For of godly men, who ever came to heaven (no, not Christ Himself), until such time as the world had thought verily, that both he and all his had been clean destroyed and cast away? as the wise man saith of the wicked people : We thought them to be fools, but they be in peace.

We may learn by things that nourish and maintain us, both meat and drink, to what loathsomeness and (in a manner) abhorring they come unto, before they work their perfection in us. From life they be brought to the fire, and clean altered from what they were when they were alive : from the fire to the trencher and knife, and all-to* hacked : from the trencher to the mouth, and as small ground as the teeth can grind them : and from the mouth into the stomach, and there so boiled and digested before they nourish, that whosoever saw the same, would loath and abhor his own nourishment before it come to his perfection. Is it then any marvel if such Christians as God delighteth in be so mangled

* Quite.

and defaced in this world, which is the kitchen and mill to boil and grind the flesh of God's people in, till they achieve their perfection in the world to come? And as man looketh for the nutriment of his meat when it is full digested, and not before, so must he look for his salvation when he hath passed this troublous world, and not before. Raw flesh is not meat wholesome for man ; and unmortified men and women be no creatures meet for God. Therefore Christ saith, that His people must be broken and all-to* torn in the mill of this world, and so shall they be most fine meal unto the heavenly Father. And it shall be a Christian man's part, and the duty of a mind replenished with the Spirit of God, to mark the order of God in all things, how He dealeth with them, and how they suffer and be content to let God do His will upon them ; as St. Paul saith, they weep until the number of the elect be fulfilled, and never be at rest, but look for the time when God's people shall appear in glory.

We must therefore patiently suffer, and willingly attend upon God's doings, although they seem clean contrary, after our judgment, to our wealth and salvation ; as Abraham did when he was bid to offer his son Isaac, in whom God promised the blessing and multiplying of his seed. Joseph at the last came to that which God promised him, although in the meantime, after the judgment of the world, he was never like to be (as God

* Quite.

said he should be) lord over his brethren. When Christ would make the blind man to see, He put clay upon his eyes, which, after the judgment of man, was means rather to make him double blind than to give him sight ; but He obeyed, and knew that God could work His desire, what means soever He used contrary to man's reasons ; and, as touching this world, He useth all His after the same sort. If any smart, His people be the first ; if any suffer shame, they begin ; if any be subject to slander, it is those that He loveth, so that He showeth no face or favour (nor love almost) in this world outwardly to them, but layeth clay upon their sore eyes that be sorrowful ; yet the patient man seeth (as St. Paul saith) life hid under these miseries and adversities, and sight under foul clay ; and in the meantime he hath the testimony of a good conscience, and believeth God's promises to be his consolation in the world to come, which is more worth unto him than all the world is worth besides ; and blessed is that man in whom God's Spirit beareth record that he is the son of God, whatsoever troubles he suffer in this troublesome world.

And to judge things indifferently,* my godly wife, the troubles be not yet generally as they were in our good fathers' times, soon after the death and resurrection of our Saviour Christ Jesus, whereof He spake in St. Matthew. Of the which place you and I have taken many times great consolation, and especially of the latter part of the

* Impartially.

chapter, wherein is contained the last day and end of all troubles (I doubt not) both for you and me, and for such as love the coming of our Saviour Christ to judgment. Remember, therefore, that place, and mark it again, and ye shall in this time see great consolation, and also learn much patience. Was there ever such trouble as Christ threatened upon Jerusalem? Was there since the beginning of the world such affliction? Who was then best at ease? The apostles, that suffered in body persecution, and gathered of it ease and quietness in the promises of God. And no marvel; for Christ saith, Lift up your heads, for your redemption is at hand, that is to say, your eternal rest approacheth and draweth near. The world is stark blind, and more foolish than foolishness itself, and so be the people of the world. For when God saith, Trouble shall come, they will have ease. And when God saith, Be merry, and rejoice in trouble, we lament and mourn, as though we were castaways. But this the flesh (which is never merry with virtue, nor sorry with vice, never laugheth with grace, nor ever weepeth with sin) holdeth fast with the world, and letteth God slip.

But, my dearly beloved wife, you know how to perceive and to beware of the vanity and crafts of the devil well enough in Christ. And that ye may the better have patience in the Spirit of God, read again the twenty-fourth chapter of St. Matthew, and mark what difference is between the destruction of Jerusalem and the destruction of the whole world; and you shall see, that then

there were left alive many offenders to repent ; but at the latter day there shall be absolute judgment and sentence (never to be revoked) of eternal life and eternal death upon all men ; and yet towards the end of the world, we have nothing so much extremity as they had then, but even as we be able to bear. So doth the merciful Father lay upon us now imprisonment (and I suppose for my part shortly death), now spoil of goods, loss of friends, and, the greatest loss of all, the knowledge of God's Word. God's will be done ! I wish, in Christ Jesus our only Mediator and Saviour, your constancy and consolation, that you may live for ever and ever ; whereof in Christ I doubt not : to whom, for His blessed and most painful passion, I commit you. Amen.

Your brother in Christ,
JOHN HOOPER.

13th October, 1553.

Rowland Taylor.

DR. ROWLAND TAYLOR, a man of great learning and piety, was appointed Vicar of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, through the influence of Cranmer. Throughout the reign of Edward VI. he was earnest in his efforts to promote the Reformation. On Mary's accession to the throne, therefore, he was soon singled out as an example. Through the connivance of two of his parishioners, mass was celebrated during Passion Week without his consent. As he sat in his study he heard the unexpected sound of bell-ringing, and, on discovering the cause, protested against the desecration of his church; his protest was vain, and he was thrust from the building, informed against, and summoned to appear before Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester. After boldly replying to the bishop's questions, he was committed to the King's Bench for heresy and schism, there remaining for nearly two years. In January 1555 he was brought up on the old charge, before the Bishops of Winchester, Norwich, Salisbury, and Durham. On his boldly declining to submit to the "Romish Antichrist," sentence of death was passed upon him. He was detained for a week in the Poultry Compter, and then, at two o'clock one morning, conducted in the dark to an inn without Aldgate—the Woolpack. His wife and little daughter, together with an adopted child, waited for him all night long in the porch of St. Botolph's Church, Aldgate, and there he took leave of them, kneeling down in the street to pray. On quitting the Woolpack a faithful servant—John Hull—lifted his little son on to his horse, when Dr. Taylor "prayed for his child and blessed him," and then set forth on his journey. At Hadleigh he was received with much lamentation by his parishioners, who cried as he passed, "Ah, good Lord! there goeth our good shepherd from us, who so faithfully

hath taught us, so fatherly hath cared for us, and so religiously hath governed us !” When he arrived at Aldham Common, he was bidden prepare for execution ; not being allowed to speak to the people he silently prayed, then went up to the stake and kissed it. At first none would kindle the fire, but that being at last accomplished, Dr. Taylor, repeating the *Miserere*, died without a cry, a brutal blow on the head finally ending his sufferings.

TO MY DEAR FATHERS AND BRETHREN,

Doctor Cranmer, Doctor Ridley, and Doctor Latimer,
prisoners in Oxford, for the faithful testimony of
God’s holy Gospel.

RIGHT reverend fathers in the Lord, I wish you to enjoy continually God’s grace and peace through Jesus Christ ; and God be praised again and again for this your most excellent promotion which ye are called unto at this present ; that is, that ye are counted worthy to be allowed amongst the number of Christ’s records and witnesses. England hath had but a few learned bishops that would stick to Christ *ad ignem inclusive*. Once again I thank God heartily in Christ for your most happy onset, most valiant proceedings, most constant suffering of all such infamies, hissings, clappings, taunts, open rebukes, loss of living and liberty, for the defence of God’s cause, truth, and glory. I cannot utter with pen how I rejoice in my heart for you three ; such captains in the foreward, under Christ’s cross, banner, or standard, in such a cause and skirmish, when not only one or two of our dear Redeemer’s strongholds are besieged, but all His chief

castles, ordained for our safeguard, are treacherously impugned. This your enterprise, in the sight of all that be in heaven, and of all God's people in earth, is most pleasant to behold. This is another manner of nobility, than to be in the forefront in worldly warfares. For God's sake pray for us, for we fail not daily to pray for you. We are stronger and stronger in the Lord, His name be praised, and we doubt not but ye be so in Christ's own sweet school. Heaven is all and wholly on our side; therefore *Gaudete in Domino semper, et iterum gaudete et exultate.*

Your assured in Christ,

ROWLAND TAYLOR.

TO A FRIEND OF HIS,

Which was desirous to know the talk that was betwixt him and the Queen's Commissioners at the time of his examination.

WHEREAS you would have me to write the talk between the King and Queen's most honourable council and me on Tuesday, the 22nd of January, this, so far as I remember, was the effect thereof:—

First, my Lord Chancellor said, You, among other, are at this time sent for to enjoy the King's and Queen's Majesties' favour and mercy, if you will now rise again with us from the fall, which we generally have received in this realm, from the which (God be praised!) we are now clearly delivered miraculously. If you will not

rise with us now, and receive mercy now offered, you shall have judgment according to your demerits. To this I answered, That so to rise, should be greatest fall that ever I could receive; for I should so fall from my dear Saviour Christ to Antichrist. For I do believe that the religion set forth in King Edward's days, was according to the vein of the Holy Scripture, which containeth fully all the rules of our Christian religion, from the which I do not intend to decline so long 'as I live, by God's grace.

Then Master Secretary Bourne said, Which of the religions mean you of in King Edward's days? for you know there were divers books of religion set forth in his days. There was a religion set forth in a catechism by my Lord of Canterbury; do you mean that you will stick to that? I answered, my Lord of Canterbury made a catechism to be translated in English, which book was not of his own making, yet he set it forth in his own name, and truly that book for the time did much good; but there was after that set forth by the most innocent King Edward (for whom God be praised everlastingly!) the whole church service, set forth with great deliberation, and the advice of the best learned men of the realm, and authorised by the whole Parliament, and received and published gladly by the whole realm; which book was never reformed but once, and yet by that one reformation it was so fully perfected, according to the rules of our religion in every behalf, that no Christian conscience could be offended with any thing

therein contained—I mean of that book reformed. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Didst thou never read the book that I had set forth of the Sacrament? I answered, that I had read it. Then he said, How likest thou that book? With that, one of the council (whose name I know not) said, My Lord, that is a good question; for I am sure that book stoppeth all their mouths. Then said I, My Lord, I think many things be far wide from the truth of God's Word in that book. Then my Lord said, Thou art a very varlet. To that I answered, That is as ill as Raca, or Fatue.* Then my Lord said, Thou art an ignorant beetle brow.† To that I answered, I have read over and over again the Holy Scriptures, and Saint Austin's works through, and Saint Cyprian, Eusebius, Origen, Gregory Nazianzen, with divers other books throughout; therefore, I thank God, I am not utterly ignorant. Besides these, my Lord, I professed the civil law, as your Lordship did, and I have read over the canon law also. Then my Lord said, With a corrupt judgment thou readest all things; touching my profession, it is Divinity, in which I have written divers books. Then I said, My Lord, ye did write one book *De vera obedientia*; I would you had been constant in that; for, indeed, you never did declare a good conscience that I heard of, but in that one book. Then my Lord said, Tut, tut, tut! I wrote against Bucer in priests' marriages; but such books please not such wretches as thou art,

* Thou fool.

† Thick-headed.

which hast been married many years. To that I answered, I am married indeed, and I have had nine children in holy matrimony, I thank God ; and this I am sure of, that your proceedings now at this present in this realm against priests' marriages, is the maintenance of the doctrine of devils, against natural law, civil law, canon law, general councils, canons of the apostles, ancient doctors, and God's laws.

Then spake my Lord of Durham, saying, You professed the civil law, as you say : then you know that Justinian writeth, that priests at their taking of orders should swear, that they were never married ; and he bringeth in to prove that, *Canones Apostolorum*. To that I answered, that I did not remember any such law of Justinian : but I am sure that Justinian writeth in *Titulo de indicta viduitate*, in cod., that if one would bequeath to his wife in his testament a legacy, under a condition that she should never marry again, and take an oath of her for the accomplishing of the same, yet she shall marry again if he die, notwithstanding the aforesaid condition and oath taken and made against marriage : and an oath is another manner of obligation to God, than is a papistical vow. Moreover, in the *Pandects* it is contained, that if a man do manumit his handmaid under a condition that she shall never marry, yet she may marry : and her patron shall lose *jus patronatus*, for his adding of the unnatural and unlawful condition against matrimony.

Then my Lord Chancellor said, Thou sayest that

priests may be married by God's law ; how provest thou that ? I answered, By the plain words and sentences of St. Paul both to Timothy and to Titus, where St. Paul doth speak most evidently of the marriage of priests, deacons, and bishops. And St. Chrysostome, writing upon the Epistle to Timothy, saith, It is an heresy to say that a bishop may not be married. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Thou lyest of Chrysostome ; but thou doest as all thy companions 'do, belye ever without all shame, both the Scriptures and the doctors. Didst thou not also say, that by the canon law priests may be married ; which is most untrue, and the contrary is most true. I answered, we read in the decrees, the four general councils, Nicene, Constantinople, Ephesian, and Chalcedon, have the same authority that the four Evangelists have. And we read in the same decrees, which is one of the chief books of the canon law, that the Council of Nice, by the means of one Paphnutius, did allow priests' and bishops' marriages : therefore, by the best part of the canon law, priests may be married.

Then my Lord Chancellor said, Thou falsifieth the general council : for there is express mention in the said decree, that priests should be divorced from their wives which be married. Then said I, If those words be there as you say, then am I content to lose this great head of mine : let the book be fetched. Then said my lord of Durham, Though they be not there, yet they may be in *Ecclesiastica Historia*, which Eusebius wrote, out of which book the decree was taken. Then said I, It is not

like that the pope would leave out any such sentence, having such authority, and making so much for his purpose. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Gratian was but a patcher, and thou art glad to snatch up such a patch as maketh for thy purpose. I answered, My lord, I cannot but marvel that you do call one of the chief papists that ever was, but a patcher. Then my Lord Chancellor said, Nay, I call thee a snatcher and a patcher. To make an end, wilt thou not return again with us to the Catholic Church? and with that he rose. And I said, By God's grace I will never depart from Christ's Church. Then I required that I might have some of my friends to come to me in prison. And my Lord Chancellor said, Thou shalt have judgment within this week. My lord of Durham would that I should believe as my father and my mother. I alleged St. Augustine, that we ought to prefer God's Word before all men. And so I was delivered again unto my keeper.

R. T.

A LETTER WHICH HE SENT TO HIS WIFE AND
CHILDREN

And other of his friends in Hadley, as his farewell
and last testament.

I SAY to my wife and to my children, The Lord gave you unto me, and the Lord hath taken me from you, and you from me; blessed be the name of the Lord. I believe that they are blessed which die in the Lord. God

careth for sparrows, and for the hairs of our heads. I have ever found Him more faithful and favourable than any father or husband. Trust ye therefore in Him, by the means of our dear Saviour Christ's merits ; believe, love, fear, and obey Him. Pray to Him, for He hath promised to help. Count me not dead, for I shall certainly live, and never die. I go before, and ye shall follow after, to our long home. I go to the rest of my children, Susan, George, Ellen, Robert, and Zachary. I have bequeathed you to the only Omnipotent.

I say to you, my dear friends of Hadley, and to all other which have heard me preach, that I depart hence with a quiet conscience as touching my doctrine : for the which, I pray you, thank God with me ; for I have after my little talent declared to other, those lessons that I gathered out of God's Book, the blessed Bible. Therefore if I or any angel from heaven should preach to you any other Gospel than that ye have received, God's great curse upon that preacher ! Beware, for God's sake, that ye deny not God, neither decline from the word of faith, lest God decline from you, and so ye do everlastingly perish.

For God's sake beware of popery ; for though it appear to have in it unity, yet the same is in vanity and Antichristianity, and not in Christ's faith and verity. Beware of the sin against the Holy Ghost, now after such a light opened so plainly and simply, truly, thoroughly, and generally to all England.

The Lord grant all men His good and Holy Spirit,

increase of His wisdom, increase of condemning the wicked world, increase of desiring heartily to be with God and the heavenly company, through Jesus Christ—our only mediator, advocate, righteousness, life, sanctification, and hope. Amen, amen. Pray, pray.

ROWLAND TAYLOR, departing hence in sure hope, without all doubting, of eternal salvation—I thank God my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, my certain Saviour. Amen. *5th February*, Anno 1555.

Lawrence Saunders.

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS, who was of a good family, was educated at Eton, and thence passed on to King's College, Cambridge, where he spent three years in earnest study. On leaving the University he was bound apprentice to a London merchant, Sir William Chester. His master discovered by accident that the career chosen for him by his friends was distasteful to Saunders, and generously set him free; whereupon Saunders returned to Cambridge, there to study Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and the Holy Scriptures. At the beginning of the reign of Edward VI., Saunders was granted a license to preach, and was appointed divinity lecturer at the College of Fotheringham, and on the dissolving of that College, reader in Lichfield Minster. Saunders was next presented to the living of Church-Langton in Leicestershire, and then to that of Allhallows, Bread Street, London. On accepting this new preferment he wished to resign his country cure, returning to Church-Langton for that object. On the afternoon of October 15th, 1553, he was about to preach a farewell sermon when he was arrested by one of the Bishop of London's officers, and cast into prison. Saunders was imprisoned for fifteen months, during the whole of which time he was forbidden any interview with his wife, who daily went to visit him with their child in her arms, in the hopes of speaking with him. At last the jailer's heart was so far touched as, at great peril to himself, to let Saunders embrace his baby. At the expiration of fifteen months Saunders was had up for examination, excommunicated, and handed over to the Sheriffs of London, who imprisoned him in the Compter, a gaol in his own parish.* On February 4th he was degraded by Bonner, Bishop of London, and then sent on to Coventry, there to be burnt at the stake on February 8th, 1555.

* On learning his destination he greatly rejoiced, because "out of

TO MISTRESS LUCY HARRINGTON,

A godly Gentlewoman, and friendly in his trouble
to him and his.

YOUR most gentle commendations, whereof this messenger made remembrance unto me, was for two causes very comfortable. First, for that thereby I understood of the state of your health and bodily welfare; for the which I give thanks unto God, who grant the long continuance thereof, to His honour and fatherly good will, whereunto I will daily say, Amen. And further, I was refreshed by the expressing of your mindful friendship towards me far unworthy thereof. Wherein I take occasion of much rejoicing in our so gracious a God and merciful Father; who, as He hath in His unmeasurable mercy by faith handfasted us His chosen children unto His dear Son our Christ, as the spiritual spouse of such a heavenly Husband; so He linketh us by love one unto another, being by that bond compact together with charitable readiness to do good one unto another; so that first to the glory of our God and His Christ, then to our own joying in the testimony of a good conscience, and last of all to the stopping of the mouths and confusion of our adversaries, we bear the badge as the right spouse of our Christ—which He Himself noteth in this His saying, Herein shall all men know that ye be My disciples, if ye love one another.

prison as before out of a pulpit, he might have an opportunity of preaching to his parishioners."

Then farther, by this bond of mutual love, is set forth the fatherly providence of God towards us His children ; that though it be He which careth for us, in whom we live, move, and be, who feedeth all flesh with bodily sustenance, yet hath He appointed us in these present necessities, to stand in His stead one unto another. Wherein is not only set forth our dignity, but also that unspeakable accord and unity among us the many members in this mystical body. And though that, either for lack of ability, or else through distance of place, power, and opportunity of helping one another, do fail ; yet wonderful is the working of God's children through the Spirit of prayer, as whereby they fetch all heavenly influence from Christ their celestial Head by His Spirit, to be measured severally as may serve to the maintenance of the whole body. Thus doth our faithful prayer, which we make one for another, distribute and scatter God's bountiful blessings both ghostly and bodily, when ordinary ability lacketh, and when the arm may not reach such God's riches. According hereunto I well perceive and understand your readiness to do good unto all ; and especially I have experience of your ready good will towards me, in your hearty desire to stretch out your helping hand to relieve my lack, and of your help to be extended to me in the other spiritual sort by your good prayer, I doubt not ; as I also therein assure you of my help, being all that I may do, and yet the same not so much as I would do.

My need concerning bodily necessities is as yet fur-

nished by God's provision, so that I am not driven to any extremity wherefore to be burdensome* to you, as your gentle benevolence provoketh me; the Lord reward you therefore.

If God make me worthy to be His witness at this present, in giving this corruptible body to burn for the testimony of His truth, it is enough for me to say unto you, that I have a poor wife and child whom I love in the Lord, and whom I know for my sake you will tender† when I am departed hence. To be short, I say unto you as I say unto myself, Rejoice in the Lord, cast your care on Him, for He careth for us, etc., and according to the time present, let us, with our Christ and all His dear disciples, weep; let us with Him (I say) weep awhile, that we may laugh with Him everlastingly. Let us consider what sort of people they were, whom St. John by revelation did behold in the heavenly bliss and everlasting joy. These are they (said the angel unto him) which came out of great tribulation, and made their garments white in the blood of the Lamb: and therefore are they in the presence of the seat of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple, and He that sitteth in the seat will dwell among them; and they shall hunger no more, neither thirst, neither shall the sun light on them, neither any heat; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the seat shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living water, and God

* Burdensome.

† Take care of.

shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. Though we sow in sorrow, we shall reap in great joy; and for this hope's sake we seek the things above, and forsake the things present.

I beseech you, give most hearty salutations unto my good lady Fitzwilliams, unto whom I wish as to you and to myself in all good things. The grace of God be always with you and that good family. Amen.

L. S.

ANOTHER LETTER TO MISTRESS LUCY HARRINGTON.

GRACE and mercy, etc. It happeneth oftentimes that abundance of matter, bringing with it much vehemence of friendly affection, maketh men dumb; and even then chiefly when there is most eager purpose of speaking silence doth suppress, and causeth the party so affected imperfectly to express that he goeth about to utter. Such impediment, by much matter mingled with fervency of affection, feel I sometimes in myself, letting* the utterance either by tongue or writing of the abundance of the heart. The love of our most gracious God and heavenly Father, bestowed upon us in the merits of His Christ our Saviour—who may by conception of mind comprehend, passing indeed all understanding? Much less may the same by any means be expressly uttered. And as such heavenly blessings, which by faith we fetch from above, be inexplicable; so is it hard to utter, when

* Hindering.

the faithful are set on fire by love, their readiness to reach forth and to give by charity, as by faith they have received. But, alas ! we carry this treasure in earthen vessels ; many times faith is feeble, and then love loseth her fervour. Pray we therefore—Lord, increase our faith ; and love forthwith will be on fire.

And immortal thanks be given unto our God, who in our Christ hath bestowed upon us the first-fruits of His Spirit, who crieth in our hearts, Abba, Father. And as St. Paul saith, Seeing we have the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed and therefore have I spoken ; we also believe and therefore we speak. Yea, God knoweth, this spirit putteth in us a mind to speak ; but in attempting thereof, we are driven with Moses to say, O Lord, I am slow mouthed and of uncircumcised lips ; and with Jeremy, O Lord, I cannot speak. Albeit that this infancy refraineth* the opening of such abundance of heart in my tender Christian duty to be declared towards you, yet I beseech you let this be settled in your understanding ; that as St. Paul expresseth unto his Corinthians, that they were in his heart either to live or to die, with many other such sayings, uttered unto them and the Galatians, expressing his vehement affection towards them ; so in some part I would be like affected towards all God's children, and especially towards you whom I know in Christ, and to whom I will not say how much I am indebted. I thank you for

* This inability hindereth.

your great friendship and tender good-will towards my wife ; yea, that good gracious God recompense you, which may worthily with the more countervail* the same, and fulfil that which lacketh of thankful duty in us.

And because of that which heretofore I have conceived of you, and of your love more than natural towards me and mine, I make myself thus bold to lay this burden upon you, even the care and charge of my said poor wife ; I mean, to be unto her a mother and a mistress, to rule and direct her by your discreet counsel. I know she conceiveth of you the same that I do, and is thankful unto God with me for such a friend ; and therefore, I beseech you even for Christ's sake, put never from you this friendly charge over her, whether I live longer or shortly depart. But to charge you otherwise, thanks be to God, neither I neither she have any such extreme need : if we had, I would be as bold with you as mine own mother. I beseech you, give my hearty salutations unto Master Fitzwilliams and my good lady, with thanks also for my poor wife and child : the Lord recompense them.

L. S.

TO HIS GODLY AND FAITHFUL WIFE,

And to his dear friends Master Robert Harrington and
Master Hurland.

GRACE and comfort, etc. Dear wife, rejoice in our gracious God and His our Christ, and give thanks most humbly and heartily to Him for this day's work, that in

* Who can suitably with more things reward.

any part I, most unworthy wretch, should be made worthy to bear witness unto His everlasting verity ; which Antichrist, with His, by main force (I perceive), and by most impudent pride and boasting, will go about to suppress. Remember God alway, my dear wife, and so shall God's blessing light upon you and our Samuel. Oh, remember always my words, for Christ's sake : be merry, and grudge not against God—and pray, pray ! We be all merry here, thanks be unto God, who in His Christ hath given us great cause to be merry ; by whom He hath prepared for us such a kingdom, and doth and will give unto us some little taste thereof even in this life, and to all such as are desirous to take it. Blessed (saith our Christ) be they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Let us go, yea, let us run to seek such treasure, and that with whole purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord ; to find such riches in His Heavenly Word, through his Spirit obtained by prayer.

My dear friends and brethren, Master Harrington and Master Hurland, pray, pray ! *Spiritus quidem promptus est, caro autem infirma.* When I took upon myself, *quid ego stupidus et attonitus habeo quod dicam, nisi illud Petri, Exi a me, Domine, quia homo peccator sum.* But then feel I that sweet comfort, *Lucerna pedibus meis verbum Domini, et lumen semitis meis, et hæc mea est consolatio in humilitate mea.* Then wax I bold with the same Peter to say, Domine, ad quem ibimus ? *verba vitæ eternæ habes.*

This comfort have I, when the Giver thereof doth give it. But I look for battles, which the root of unfaithfulness, the which I feel in me, will most eagerly give unto my conscience when we come once to the combat. We be (I ween) within the sound of the trump of our enemies; play, ye that be abroad, the part of Moses, orantes in omni loco, sustollentes puras manus, and God's people shall prevail; yea, our blood shall be their perdition who do most triumphantly spill it; and we then, being in the hands of our God, shall shine in His kingdom, and shall stand in great steadfastness against them which have dealt extremely with us. And when these our enemies shall thus see us, they shall be vexed with horrible fear, and shall wonder at the hastiness of the sudden health, and shall say with themselves, having inward sorrow and mourning for very anguish of mind, These are they whom we sometime had in derision and jested upon: we fools thought their lives to be very madness, and their end to be without honour; but, lo how they are accounted among the children of God! The blessing of God be with you all! Salute, I pray you, my sister B.S., with other our friends in the same house. God's grace keep them, with all the rest of our godly acquaintance, lovers of the truth and furtherers of the true confession of the same: whom all I bid most heartily to be merry in the Lord, rejoicing in hope, preparing themselves to be patient in tribulation, with continuance in prayer.—Let somebody buy for me a pencil of lead to write withal,

for I shall hardly have pen and ink here, since all liberty of writing is taken away from us.

L. S.

ANOTHER LETTER TO HIS WIFE,

And to Master Harrington and Master Hurland.

GRACE and comfort, etc. Wife, you shall do best not to come often unto the grate where the porter may see you. Put not yourself in danger where it needs not: you shall, I think, shortly come far enough into danger, by keeping faith and a good conscience; which (dear wife) I trust you do not slack to make reckoning and account upon, by exercising your inward man in meditation of God's most Holy Word, being the sustenance of the soul, and also by giving yourself to humble prayer: for these two things be the very means how to be made members of our Christ meet to inherit His kingdom.

Do this (dear wife) in earnest, and not leaving off; and so we too shall, with our Christ and all His chosen children, enjoy the merry world in the everlasting immortality; whereas here will nothing else be found but extreme misery, even of them which most greedily seek this worldly wealth; and so, if we two continue God's children grafted in our Christ, the same God's blessing which we receive shall also settle upon our Samuel. Though we do shortly depart hence, and leave the poor infant (to our seeming) at all adventures, yet shall he have our gracious God to be his God: for so hath He said, and He cannot lie; I will be Thy God,

saith He, and the God of thy seed. Yea, if you leave him in the wild wilderness destitute of all help, being called of God to do His will, either to die for the confession of Christ, either * any work of obedience; that God which heard the cry of the little poor infant of Hagar, Sarah's handmaiden, and did succour it, will do the like to the child of you or any other fearing Him, and putting your trust in Him. And if we lack faith, as we do indeed many times, let us call for it; and we shall have the increase both of it, and also of any other good grace needful for us, and be merry in God, in whom also I am very merry and joyful.

O Lord, what great cause of rejoicing have we, to think upon that kingdom which He vouchsafes, for His Christ's sake, freely to give us, forsaking ourselves and following Him! Dear wife, this is truly to follow Him, even to take up our cross and follow Him; and then as we suffer with Him, so shall we reign with Him everlastingly. Amen. Shortly, shortly! Amen.

My dear friends, Master Harrington and Master Hurland, pray, pray, and be merry in God: and I beseech you, as you may, let the good brethren abroad be put in mind of our dear tried brethren and sisters, who have (the Lord be praised!) made known their constancy in confessing the truth, to the glory of God, and comfort (I doubt not) of His Church abroad. Thus have they sown spiritual things, confessing Christ. I

* Or.

trust they will not be forgetful, that they may reap, of them which are of ability and at liberty, their carnal things. Hereof I speak now, because of my tender desire towards these dear brethren here now in bonds and in other places; and also for that I doubt whether I may have wherewith to write hereafter. The keeper saith, he must needs see that we write not at all. The devil roareth: but be of good cheer; he will shortly be trodden underfoot, and the rather by the blood of martyrs. Salute, in my most hearty manner, good Master Harrington and my good Lady F. I am theirs as long as I live, and pray for them: desire them to do likewise for me, and for all us sheep appointed for the slaughter.

A prisoner in the Lord,

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS

TO HIS WIFE,

And other of his dear friends and lovers in the Lord.

GRACE and comfort in Christ Jesu, our only comfort in all extreme assaults, be with you. Amen.

Fain would this flesh make strange of that which the spirit doth embrace. Oh Lord, how loth is this loitering sluggard to pass forth in God's path! It fantasieth, forsooth, much fear of fraybugs;* and were it not for the force of faith pulling it forward by the bridle of God's most sweet promises, and of hope pricking on

* Spectres.

behind, great adventure there were of fainting by the way. But blessed and everlastingly blessed be that heavenly Father of ours, who, in His Christ our sufficient Saviour, hath vouchsafed so to shine in our heart, that He giveth us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ: and having this treasure in our earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be God's, and not ours, we are, according to His good will, troubled on every side, yet are we not without shift; we are in poverty, but yet not without that is sufficient. We suffer persecution, but are not forsaken therein. We are cast down, nevertheless we perish not. We bear in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might appear also in our bodies.

Wherefore, by the grace of our Christ, we shall not be wearied nor be dismayed by this our probation through the fire of affliction, as though some strange thing had happened unto us: but by His power we shall rejoice, inasmuch as we are partakers of Christ's passions;* that when He doth appear, we may be merry and glad, knowing that our tribulation, which is momentary and light, prepareth an exceeding and eternal weight of glory unto us, not looking on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy: he that goeth on his way now weeping, and scattereth

* Sufferings.

his good seed, shall doubtless come again with joy and bring his sheaves with him. Then, then shall the Lord wipe away all tears from our eyes. Then, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory; Death, where is thy sting? Hell, where is thy victory? Yea, thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now then in the mean season it remaineth for us to follow St. Peter's bidding. Let them, saith he, that are troubled according to the will of God, commit their souls to Him with well doing, as unto a faithful Creator and Maker. He is our Maker. We be His handy work and creatures, whom now when He hath made, He doth not so leave and forsake as the carpenter doth the ship, leaving it at all adventures to be tossed in the tempest; but He comforteth us His creatures, and in Him we live, move, and have our being. Yea, not only that, but now that He hath in His dear Christ repaired us, being before utterly decayed, and redeemed us, purging us unto Himself as a peculiar people by the blood of His Son, He hath put on a most tender good-will and fatherly affection towards us, never to forget us; unto whom by such sure promises He hath plighted such faith, that though it were possible that the mother could forget her infant, and not be tender-hearted to the child of her womb, yet may it not be that His faithful believers should see Him fall into forgetfulness. He biddeth us to cast our care on Him, and telleth us that

He assuredly careth for us. And what though for a season He suffereth us to be troubled in the troublous tempests of temptation, and seemeth in much anger to have given us over and forgotten us? Let not us for all that leave off to put our trust in Him; but let us with godly Job conclude* in ourselves and say, Yea, though He kill me, yet will I put my trust in Him. Let us with the blessed Abraham, in hope even contrary to hope, by belief, lean unto that our loving Lord, who though for our probation He suffereth us to be afflicted and proved for a season, yet will He not be always chiding, neither keepeth He His anger for ever; for He knoweth whereof we are made, He remembereth that we are but dust. Wherefore look how high the heaven is in comparison of the earth, so great is His mercy towards them which fear Him. Look how wide the east is from the west, so far hath He set our sins from us. Yea, like as a father pitieth his own children, even so is the Lord merciful unto them that fear Him.

Oh what great cause of rejoicing have we therefore in our most gracious God! We cannot but burst out into the praising of such a bountiful Benefactor, and say with the Psalmist, Praise the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

My dear wife, riches I have none to leave behind me, wherewith to endow you after the worldly manner; but that treasure of tasting how sweet Christ is unto hungry

* Resolve.

consciences (whereof, I thank my Christ, I do feel part, and would feel more), I bequeath unto you, and to the rest of my friends ; to all you I say, that love me in the Lord, to retain the same insense * of heart always, Pray, pray ! I am merry, and I trust shall be merry, in spite of all the devils in hell. I utterly refuse myself,† and I resign myself wholly unto my Christ, in whom I know I shall be strong as He seeth needful. Pray, pray, pray !

L. SAUNDERS.

TO HIS WIFE.

GRACE, mercy, and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord. Entirely beloved wife, even as unto mine own soul and body, so do I daily in my hearty prayer wish unto you ; for I do daily, twice at the least, in this sort remember you. And I do not doubt (dear wife) but that both I and you, as we be written in the Book of Life, so we shall together enjoy the same everlastingly, through the grace and mercy of God, our dear Father in His Son our Christ. And for this present life, let us wholly appoint‡ ourselves to the will of our good God, to glorify Him either by life or by death : and even that same merciful Lord make us worthy to honour Him either way, as pleaseth Him. Amen. I am merry, I thank my God and my Christ, in whom, and through whom, I shall (I know) be able to fight a good fight, and finish a good course, and then receive the crown

* Feeling.

† Renounce.

‡ Give.

which is laid up in store for me, and all the true soldiers of Christ. Wherefore, wife, let us, in the name of our God, fight lustily to overcome the flesh, the devil, and the world. What our harness and weapons be in this kind of fight, look the sixth unto the Ephesians; and pray, pray, pray! I would that you make no suit for me in any wise. Thank, you know whom, for her most sweet and comfortable putting me in remembrance of my journey whither I am passing. God send us all good speed, and a joyful meeting. I have too few such friends to further me in that journey, which is indeed the greatest friendship. The blessing of God be with you all. Amen.

A prisoner in the Lord,

LAWRENCE SAUNDERS.

TO HIS WIFE.

GRACE, mercy, and peace, etc. Dear wife, even that our merciful God and most loving Father, whom we call upon daily, and of whose mercies we daily taste, and who will be a most tender Father unto all them which heartily turn unto Him, believe in Him, and cast their care upon Him—that our good God (I say) even for His Son our sweet Christ's sake, be your helper and keeper. Amen, Amen. And now you see His goodness towards you by many ways, provoking you to embrace Him as your only God and only comfort. He is more ready mercifully to receive you, than you can be ready to run unto Him for help. He saith,

by His prophet, I will favour them even as a father doth favour his child that offendeth. And in another place, Is it possible that a mother can forget her child which she hath borne? if she be forgetful, yet will not I forget thee. Thus saith He, unto all such as unfeignedly seek Him.

You be in the Lord's bonds, and in His blessed tuition,* I do not doubt. Commend yourself, and that which He hath given you, unto His merciful and blessed will; and so do I, and shall do, by His goodness. Exercise yourself in the comfortable remembrance of God's manifold and merciful promises. Put Him in remembrance of the same by often prayer, and put your whole trust in Him; who for His Name's sake, His promise' sake, and for His Christ's sake, will do that is best for you. Commend me to all the godly there. Send me word in any wise if you lack. Take heed that you be no more chargeable unto them at whose house you be, than you shall fully content them, in any wise. God keep you.

TO HIS WIFE AND OTHER OF HIS FRIENDS.

After his condemnation to the fire, and a little before his death.

GRACE in Christ, with the consolation of the Holy Ghost, to the keeping of faith and a good conscience, confirm and keep you for ever, vessels to God's glory. Amen.

* Protection.

Oh what worthy thanks can be given to our gracious God, for His unmeasurable mercies plentifully poured upon us ! And I, most unworthy wretch, cannot but at this present from the bottom of my heart pour out the bewailing of my ingratitude and unkindness, towards so gracious a God, and loving a Lord. I beseech you all, as for my other many sins, so especially for this sin of mine unthankfulness against God, crave for me, in commending me unto God's mercy in Christ by your hearty prayers, pardon, and forgiveness. To stand to number these mercies in particulars, were to number the drops of the sea, the sand on the shore, and the stars in the sky. Oh, my dear wife, and ye the rest of my friends that love me in the Lord, rejoice, rejoice with me ; rejoice (I say) with thanksgiving for this my present promotion to be made worthy to magnify my God ; not only in my life by my slow mouth and uncircumcised lips to bear testimony unto His truth, but also by my blood to seal the same, to the glory of God, and confirming of His Church.

And as yet, I testify unto you, the comfort in my sweet Christ doth drive from my phantasy the fear of death. But if my dear Husband do for my trial leave me alone to myself, I know in what case I shall then be : but if for proof He do so, I am sure He will not be far from me. Though He stand behind the wall, and hide Himself (as Solomon saith in his mystical ballad), yet will He peep in by a crest * to see how I do. He is so tender-hearted

* Hole in the door.

a Joseph, that though He speak roughly to His brethren and handle them hardly, yea and put His best beloved brother Benjamin in prison, yet can He not contain Himself from weeping with us and upon us, with clipping * us about the neck and kissing us : such a brother is our Christ unto us all. Wherefore hasten to go unto Him, as Jacob did, and his sons and family, leaving their own country and acquaintance. Yea, this Joseph of ours hath obtained for us His brethren, that Pharaoh the infidel shall minister unto us chariots, wherein to be carried to come unto Him : as we have experience how our very adversaries help us unto our everlasting bliss, by their speedy despatch ; yea, how all things have been helping unto us, blessed be our God. And be not afraid of fraybugs † by the way : fear rather the everlasting fire, fear the serpent that hath a sting—and that is this bodily death to them which are not grafted in Christ, being without faith and a good conscience, and so not acquainted with Christ, the killer of death.

But, O my dear friends and brethren, we (we, whom God hath delivered from the power of darkness, and hath translated into the kingdom of His dear Son, by putting off the old man, and by faith putting on the new, even our Lord Jesus Christ, His wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and redemption : we, I say) have to triumph against that terrible and spiteful serpent the devil, sin, death, hell, and damnation ; for Christ our

* Taking.

† Spectres.

brazen serpent hath pulled away the sting thereof, so that now we may boldly in beholding the serpent, this bodily death, spoiled of her sting, triumph, and with our Christ and all His elect say, O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory? Thanks be unto God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Wherefore be merry, my dear friends and brethren ; always remember the Lord, my fellow-heirs of the everlasting kingdom : rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, continue in prayer ; and for us pray, now already appointed to the slaughter, that we may be unto our heavenly Father a fat offering and an accepted sacrifice. I may hardly write unto you ; wherefore let these few words be a witness of commendations to you, and all them which love us in the faith, and namely unto my flock, among whom I am now resident by God's providence, but as a prisoner. And although I am not among them as I have been, to preach to them out of a pulpit, yet doth God now preach unto them by me, and by this mine imprisonment and captivity, which now I suffer among them, for Christ's Gospel's sake, bidding them to beware of the Romish antichristian religion and kingdom, requiring and charging them to abide in the truth of Christ, which is shortly to be sealed with the blood of their pastor ; who though he be unworthy of such a ministry, yet Christ their high Pastor is to be regarded ; whose truth had been taught them by me, is witnessed by my chains, and

(by His power) shall be by my death also. Be not careful, good wife, cast your care on the Lord, and commend me unto Him in repentant prayer, as I do you and our Samuel, whom even at the stake I will offer, as myself, unto God. Fare ye well, all in Christ, in hope to be joined with you in joy everlasting. This hope is laid up in my bosom. Amen, amen ; pray, pray !

Out of the Counter in Bread-street,

L. SAUNDERS.

TO HIS WIFE AND OTHER OF HIS FRIENDS.

GRACE and comfort in Christ. Amen. Dear wife, be merry in the mercies of our Christ ; and ye also, my dear friends. Pray, pray for us, everybody. We be shortly to be despatched hence unto our good Christ. Amen, amen. Wife, I would you sent me my shirt, which you know whereunto it is consecrated. Let it be sewed down on both sides, and not open. Oh, my heavenly Father ! look upon me in the face of Thy Christ, or else I shall not be able to abide Thy countenance, such is my filthiness. He will do so ; and therefore I will not be afraid what sin, death, hell, and damnation can do against me. O wife, always remember the Lord. God bless you. Yea, He will bless thee, good wife, and thy poor boy also : only cleave thou unto Him, and He will give thee all things. Pray, pray, pray !

A LETTER WRITTEN TO A CERTAIN BACKSLIDER

From the truth of God's word, which he had both professed and taught ; the which, because it is thought of some, albeit not certainly known, to be written by Master Saunders, we have here annexed unto his letters.

IN mine own name, and in the name of many other your old familiars and acquaintance, I do write unto you in heaviness of heart, for that we have heard of your fall. Oh how much better had it been for you never to have set your hand to the plough, than negligently to look back ; yea, and foolishly to follow that plough that tilleth not God's field, but turneth up the roots of that seed which in times past you yourself have sown. Alas, how foolish a builder were you, that would enterprise to build upon the rock Christ, seeing in yourself not only the lack of those things which be required to the finishing of that work, but also the lack of a will to have them ; as appeareth by that, that you go about to overthrow the little which you seemed to have mightily builded upon that rock.

How foolish a virgin have you declared yourself to be, which have gone forth to meet the Bridegroom, and tarried so long for His coming, not having oil in store, but are now driven, when you hear the voice of the forerunner, to seek of them that sell ? You banqueted with the children of the Bridegroom so long as He was with us, but now He is gone, you leave us alone to fast.

You were contented to be fed at Christ's hand with five thousand, but when He willeth you not to seek the meat that perisheth, you depart. The children of Israel were much to be blamed, for that they desired to be in Egypt again; and yet was their lack and labour then more in desert than yours in London? Alas, wretched man! what hath caused thee thus to cast away thyself, once knowing the truth, and to take in hand to be a minister in Antichrist's Church? Art thou so soon weary of the heavenly manna, and so ready to return to thy old vomit again? We thought thou hadst been so clean escaped through the word of grace, that thou hadst been a worthy man to be a comfort to them that stand, a succour to the weak, and a help to them that fall: and art thou now rolled in thy filthy puddle again, and art become a helper to put other into the same? Oh more than damnable doings, the forgiveness whereof far passeth the hope of man! And were it not that things impossible to man are possible with God, we should utterly despair of thy return. But knowing that with God there is no impossibility, we will not only advertise thee to remember from whence thou art fallen, that thou mayest seek to rise again, but we will also pray that He to whom thy return is possible, will vouchsafe of His infinite mercies to work it in thee.

Thou hast with Judas, sold thy most loving and gentle Master; repent thee, Peter, and no doubt thou shalt find mercy. To fall is a thing annexed to the corrupt nature of man; but to lie still in the filthy puddle of

perdition is to despise God, the Author and first Maker of nature. To fall into the darkness of error is a point of man's ignorance ; but to walk on still in darkness is to love darkness more than light. To wink at the brightness of the sun is a weakness of the eyes ; but to fly the light is to be of the night. To leave the rough way that leadeth unto life, and walk in the pleasant way that leadeth unto perdition, is to love this life ; but not to leave the way when we are warned, is to despise the life to come. Briefly, to leave the good things undone that God commandeth, and to do that evil which He forbiddeth, is to deserve everlasting damnation at His hand that rewardeth every man according to his works ; but not to repent of that evil, when God calleth by His means, is to kindle the wrath of God against the impenitent and obstinate sinner.

Lest you therefore should be found a despiser of God, the Author of nature, a lover of darkness more than light ; not of the day but altogether of the night ; a lover of this life and a hater of the life to come ; and finally, such a one as would kindle the wrath of God against you ; repent, and come again to Christ. Remember what joy there is in heaven among the angels, at the conversion of a sinner. Forget not thy merciful Spouse, which would not cast off the adulterous Israel when she had committed whoredom with stocks and stones, notwithstanding that He had purged her from her filth, and married her to Himself. Be mindful of that loving Lord, which hath said, I will not the death of a sinner,

but rather that he convert and live ; and in what day soever the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, I will remember his iniquity no more. What should separate us from the love of this Lord? What should make us to fly from this our Captain? Should the weariness of an arm? Should the lack of such things as the phantasy would have? Better it were for us to enter into life with weary arms and thin cheeks, than with lovely countenances and lusty limbs to be cast into hell-fire. Make not provision for the flesh with the loss of your soul. Believe Him that hath promised all things necessary to them that seek the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof. He hath not at any time deceived you : why then should you seek such shameful shifts to make provision for the flesh? Have not you yourself had experience of the care that He taketh for them that put their trust in Him? And now, why are you fallen from Him for the belly's sake?

This have I written to call you back again, if you be not clean gone out of the way. But and if you be so given over to error, that you think light to be darkness and darkness to be light, good to be evil and evil to be good, Christ to be Belial and Belial to be Christ, the temple of God to be the synagogue of Satan, and the synagogue of Satan to be the temple of God ; then have I nothing to say unto you, but The Lord confound both you and all such. But with God's grace we trust to hear better of you.

20th of September, 1555.

John Philpot.

JOHN PHILPOT, the son of a Hampshire knight, was educated at New College, Oxford, where he was a student of civil law and languages. On leaving the University he travelled on the Continent; and whilst journeying between Venice and Padua was nearly cited as a heretic by a friar with whom he met. Having escaped this danger, and returning at length to England, he held several controversies with Gardiner, then Bishop of Winchester, but was nevertheless himself appointed Arch-deacon of that diocese. On the death of Edward VI., Philpot, with others, was called upon to sustain the cause of the Reformation against its opponents, which led him into difficulties, and caused him to be called before Bonner, charged with heresy. Eight other examinations were undergone by him; and then, the Bishops seeing that he had no intention of recanting, Bonner openly condemned him, and delivered him over to the Sheriffs. He was taken to Newgate, and at first very harshly handled; but owing to the representations made to the Sheriff by a faithful servant of Philpot's who visited his master in prison, his treatment became less severe. On the evening of Tuesday, December 27th, 1555, whilst Philpot was at supper, a message came to him that he should make ready to suffer death on the following day; to which he cheerfully answered, "I am ready; God grant me strength and a joyful resurrection." At about eight o'clock on the following morning the officers came to conduct him to Smithfield, where, having kissed the stake, and given money to those who had tended him in prison, he said, "Shall I disdain to suffer at this stake, seeing my Redeemer did not refuse to suffer the most vile death upon the cross for me?" and repeating the 106th, 107th, and 108th Psalms, he peacefully died.

TO HIS DEAR FRIEND IN THE LORD, JOHN CARELESS,
Prisoner in the King's Bench.

My dearly beloved brother Careless, I have received your loving letters, full of love and compassion; inso-much that they made my hard heart to weep, to see you so careful for one that hath been so unprofitable a member as I have been and am in Christ's Church. God make me worthy of that I am called unto; and I pray you cease not to pray for me. But cease to weep for him who hath not deserved such gentle tears; and praise God with me, for that I now approach to the company of them whose want you may worthily lament. God give your pitiful heart His inward consolation. Indeed, my dear Careless, I am in this world in hell and in the shadow of death; but He that hath brought me for my deserts down unto hell, shall shortly lift me up to heaven, where I shall look continually for your coming, and others my faithful brethren in the King's Bench. And though I tell you that I am in hell in the judgment of this world, yet assuredly I feel in the same the consolation of heaven, praise God. And this loathsome and horrible prison is as pleasant to me as the walk in the garden of the King's Bench. You know, brother Careless, that the way to heaven out of this life is very narrow, and we must strive to enter in at a narrow gate. If God do mitigate the ugliness of mine imprisonment, what will He do in the rage of the fire whereunto I am appointed? And this hath hap-

pened unto me, that I might be hereafter an ensample of comfort, if the like happen unto you or to any other of my dear brethren with you in these cruel days; in the which the devil so rageth at the faithful flock of Christ, but in vain (I trust) against any of us, who be persuaded that neither life neither death is able to separate us from the love of Christ's Gospel, which is God's high treasure committed to our brittle vessels, to glorify us by the same. God of His mercy make us faithful stewards to the end, and give us grace to fear nothing, whatsoever in His good pleasure we shall suffer for the same.

That I have not written unto you ere this, the cause is our strait keeping, and the want of light by night, for the day serveth us but a while in our dark closet. This is the first letter that I have written since I came to prison, besides the report of mine examinations, and I am fain to scribble it out in haste. Commend me to all our faithful brethren; and bid them with a good courage look for their redemption, and frame themselves to be hearty soldiers in Christ. They have taken His press-money a great while; and now let them show themselves ready to serve Him faithfully, and not to fly out of the Lord's camp into the world, as many do. Let them remember that in the Apocalypse the fearful be excluded the kingdom. Let us be of good cheer; for our Lord overcame the world, that we should do the like. Blessed is the servant whom, when the Lord cometh, He findeth watching. O let us watch

and pray earnestly one for another that we be not led into temptation. Be joyful under the cross, and praise the Lord continually; for this is the whole burnt sacrifice which the Lord chiefly delighteth in. Commend me to my father Hunt; and desire him to love and continue in the unity of Christ's true Church, which he hath begun, and then shall he make me more and more to joy under my cross with him. Tell my brother Clements that he hath comforted me much by his loving token, in signification of an unfeigned unity with us; let him increase my joy unto the end perfectly.

The Lord of peace be with you all. Salute all my loving friends, Master Mering, Master Crooch, with the rest; and especially Master Marshall and his wife, with great thanks for his kindness showed unto me. Farewell, my dear Careless. I have dallied with the devil awhile, but now I am over the shoes; God send me well out.

Out of the Coal-house, by your Brother,

JOHN PHILPOT.

ANOTHER LETTER WRITTEN TO JOHN CARELESS.

Out of the Coal-house of darkness; whereby He giveth light and heavenly comfort to his heavy and troubled mind.

THE God of all comfort, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, send unto thee, my dear brother Careless, the inward consolation of His Holy Spirit, in all the

malicious assaults and troublous temptations of our common adversary the devil. Amen.

That God giveth you so contrite a heart for your sins, I cannot but rejoice to behold the lively mark of the children of God ; whose property is to think more lowly and vilely of themselves than of any other, and oftentimes to set their sins before them, that they might the more be stirred to bring forth the fruits of repentance ; and learn to mourn in this world, that in another they might be glad and rejoice. Such a broken heart is a pleasant sacrifice unto God ; oh that I had the like contrite heart. God mollify my stony heart, which lamenteth not in such wise my former detestable iniquities. Praised be God that He hath given you this sorrowful heart in respect of righteousness ; and I pray you let me be partaker of these godly sorrows for sin, which be the testimony of the presence of the Holy Ghost.

Did not the sword of sorrow pierce the heart of the elect and blessed mother of our Lord ? Did not Peter weep bitterly for his sins, which was so beloved of Christ ? Did not Mary Magdalene wash the feet of our Saviour with her tears, and receive therewithal remission of her sevenfold sins ? Be of good comfort, therefore, mine own dear heart, in this thy sorrow ; for it is the earnest-penny of eternal consolation. In thy sorrow laugh, for the Spirit of God is with thee. Blessed be they (saith Christ) that mourn, for they shall be comforted. They went forth and wept, saith the prophet ; such shall come

again, having their gripes* full of gladness. And although a sorrowful heart in consideration of his sin be an acceptable sacrifice before God, whereby we are stirred up to more thankfulness unto God, knowing that much is forgiven us that we might love the more; yet the man of God must keep a measure in the same, lest he be swallowed up by too much sorrow. St. Paul would not the Thessalonians to be sorry as other men which have no hope. Such a sorrow is not commendable, but worketh damnation, and is far from the children of God; who are continually sorrowful in God, when they look upon their own unworthiness and hope of forgiveness. For God to this end by His Spirit setteth the sins of His elect still before them, that where they perceive sin to abound, there they might be assured that grace shall superabound; and bringeth them down unto hell, that He might lift them up with greater joy unto heaven. Wherefore, mine own bowels in Christ, as long as you are not void altogether of hope, be not dismayed through your pensive heart for your sins, how huge soever they have been; for God is able to forgive more than you are able to sin; yea, and He will forgive him, which with hope is sorry for his sins.

But know, brother, that as oft as we do go about by the help of God's Spirit to do that is good, the evil spirit Satan layeth hard wait to turn the good unto evil, and goeth about to mix the detestable darnel† of

* Grasp.

† Tares.

desperation with the godly sorrow of a pure penitent heart. You be not ignorant of his malicious subtlety ; and how that continually he assaulteth that good which the grace of God planteth. I see the battle betwixt you and him ; but the victory is yours, yea, and that daily. For you have laid hold upon the anchor of salvation, which is hope in Christ, the which will not suffer you to be made ashamed. Be not discomfited that you have this conflict ; but be glad that God hath given you the same, to try your faith, and that you might appear daily worthy of the kingdom of God, for the which you strive. God beholdeth your striving faith against Satan, and is pleased with your mighty resistance. The Spirit which is in you is mightier than all the adversary's power. Tempt he may, and lie in wait at your heels, give you a fall unawares ; but overcome he shall not, yea, he cannot, for you are sealed up already with a lively faith to be the child of God for ever ; and whom God hath once sealed for His own, him He never utterly forsaketh. The just falleth seven times, but he riseth again. It is man's frailty to fall, but it is the property of the devil's child to lie still. This strife against sin is a sufficient testimony that you are the child of God ; for if you were not, you should feel no such malice as he now troubleth you withal. When this strong Goliath hath the hold, all things be in peace which he possesseth ; and because he hath you not, he will not suffer you unassaulted. But stand fast, and hold out the buckler of faith, and with the sword of God's

promises smite him on the scalp, that he may receive a deadly wound, and never be able to stand against you any more. St. James telleth you that he is but a coward, saying, Resist the devil and he will fly away. It is the will of God that he should thus long tempt you, and not go away as yet, or else he had done with you long ere this. He knoweth already that he shall receive the foil at your hands, and increase the crown of your glory; for he that overcometh shall be crowned.

Therefore glory in your temptations, since they shall turn to your felicity. Be not afraid of your continual assaults, which be occasions of your daily victory. The Word of God abideth for ever: In what hour soever a sinner repenteth him of his sins they be forgiven. Who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect? Do you not perceive the manifest tokens of your election?—first, your vocation to the Gospel, and after your vocation the manifest gifts of the Spirit of God, given unto you above many other of your condition, with godliness which believeth and yieldeth to the authority of the Scriptures, and is zealous for the same. Seeing you are God's own darling, who can hurt you? Be not of a deject mind for these temptations, neither make your unfeigned friends to be more sorrowful for you than need doth require. Since God hath willed you at your baptism in Christ to be *Careless*, why do you make yourself careful? Cast all your care on Him; set the Lord before your eyes always, for He is on your right side that you shall not be moved. Behold the goodness

of God toward me. I am careless, being fast closed in a pair of stocks, which pinch me for very straitness ; and will you be careful ? I will not have that unseemly addition to your name. Be as your name pretendeth, for doubtless you have none other cause but so to be. Pray, I beseech you, that I may be still careless in my careful estate, as you have cause to be careless in your easier condition. Be thankful, and put away all care, and then I shall be joyful in my strait present care.

Commend me to all our brethren, and desire them to pray for me that I may overcome my temptations ; for the devil rageth against me. I am put in the stocks in a place alone, because I would not answer to such articles as they would charge me with, all in a corner, at the bishop's appointment ; and because I did not come to mass when the bishop sent for me. I will lie all the days of my life in the stocks (by God's grace), rather than I will consent to the wicked generation. Praise God ; and be joyful that it hath pleased Him to make us worthy to suffer somewhat for His name's sake. The devil must rage for ten days. Commend me to Master Fokes, and thank him for his law books ; but law, neither equity, will take any place among these blood-thirsty. I would, for your sake, their unjust dealing were noted unto the Parliament House, if it might avail. God shorten these evil days. I have answered the bishop meetly plain already ; and I say to him, if he will call me in open judgment, I will answer him as plainly as he will require : otherwise I

have refused, because I fear they will condemn me in hugger-mugger.* The peace of God be with you, my dear brother. I can write no more for lack of light, and that I have written I cannot read myself, and God knoweth it is written far uneasily : I pray God you may pick out some understanding of my mind towards you.

Written in a coal-house of darkness, out of a pair
of painful stocks, by thine own in Christ,

JOHN PHILPOT.

A LETTER OF JOHN CARELESS.

Written to Master Philpot ; which we thought best here to place apart from his other letters hereafter following, because it is an answer to the former letter.

A FAITHFUL friend is a strong defence ; whoso findeth such a one, findeth a treasure.

A faithful friend hath no peer ; the weight of gold and silver is not to be compared to the goodness of his faith.

A faithful friend is a medicine of life, and they that fear the Lord shall find him.—Ecclesiasticus vi.

The Father of mercy, and God of all consolation, comfort you with His Eternal Spirit, my most dear and faithful loving friend, good Master Philpot, as you have comforted me by the mighty operation of the same ; the everlasting God be praised therefore for ever. Amen.

* In the dark.

Ah, my dear heart, and most loving brother, if I should do nothing else day and night so long as the days of heaven do endure, but kneel on my knees and read psalms, I can never be able to render unto God condign * thanks for His great mercy, fatherly kindness, and most loving compassion, extended unto me most vile, sinful, wicked, and unworthy wretch. Oh that the Lord would open my mouth, and give me a thankful heart, that from the bottom of the same might flow His continual praise. Oh that my sinful flesh (which is the cause of my sorrow) were clean separated from me, that I might sing psalms of thanksgiving unto the Lord's name for ever ; that with good Samuel's mother I might continually record this noble verse following, the which, by good experience, I have found most true—praised be my good God therefore : The Lord (saith the good woman) killeth and maketh alive : He bringeth down to hell and setteth up again. Praised be that Lord for ever, yea, and praised be His name, for that He hath given me true experience and lively feeling of the same. Blessed be the Lord God, whose mercy endureth for ever, which hath not dealt with me according to my deep deserts, nor destroyed me in His displeasure, when I had justly deserved it. Oh what reward shall I give again unto the Lord for all the great benefits that He hath done for my soul ? I will gladly receive the cup of salvation at His hand, and will worship His name with prayer and with praise.

* Suitable.

Ah, my dear heart, yea, most dear unto me in the Lord, think not this sudden change in me to be some sickle phantasy of my foolish head (as indeed some other would surely suspect it to be); for doubtless it is the marvellous doing of the Lord, most merciful unto me His unworthy creature. God, for His great mercy's sake, give me grace to be more thankful unto Him than I heretofore have been, and keep me that I never fall forth of His favour again. And now, my dear brother and most blessed messenger of the Lord, whose beautiful feet have brought much glad tidings unto my soul, what shall I do or say unto you, in the least part to recompense your fatherly affection and godly care, that you continually keep for me? Oh that God would give me the spirit of fervent prayer, that I might yet that way supply some little part of my duty toward you. Ah, my true, loving friend, how soon did you lay aside all other business to make a sweet plaister for my wounded conscience, yea, and that out of a painful pair of stocks, which place must needs be uneasy to write in. But God hath brought you into a straight place, that you might set my soul at liberty. Out of your pinching and painful seat, you have plentifully poured upon me your precious nard, the sweet savour whereof hath greatly refreshed my tired soul. The Lord likewise refresh you, both body and soul, by pouring the oil of His gracious Spirit into your sweet heart.

Ah, good Jeremiah, hath Pashur put thee in the stocks? why now thou hast the right reward of a prophet. Thy

glory never began to appear until now. I doubt not but shortly, instead of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, Jesus the Son of the living God will come and deliver thee forth of the hands of all thine enemies, and will also make good, against them and the antichristian synagogue, all the words that thou hast spoken in His name. The Lord hath made thee this day a strong defended tower, an iron pillar and a brazen wall against the whole rabble of Antichrist; and though they fight against thee never so fiercely, yet shall they not overcome thee; for the Lord Himself is with thee to help and deliver thee, and He will rid thee out of the hands of the wicked, and will deliver thee out of the hands of the tyrants. And in that you are not busy in casting pearls before swine, nor in giving holy things unto dogs, you are much to be commended in my simple judgment. And sure I am that your circumspect and modest behaviour hitherto hath been as much to God's glory and confusion of your enemies, as any man's doings that are gone before you. Wherefore mine advice and earnest desire is, with all other of your loving friends, that you still keep that order* with those bloodthirsty bishops that you have begun.

For though in conclusion they will surely have your blood; yet shall they come by it with shame enough, and to their perpetual infamy whilst the world doth endure. They would indeed condemn you in hugger-mugger† to darken God's glory if it might be: but

* Method.

† In the dark.

Satan's thoughts are not unknown to you, and the depth of his subtlety is by you well foreseen. Therefore let them do whatsoever God shall suffer them to do, for I know all things shall turn to your best. Though you lie in the dark, slorried* with the bishop's black coal dust, yet shall you shortly be restored to the heavenly light, and made as white as snow in Salmon, and as the wings of a dove that is covered with silver wings, and her feathers like gold. You know, the vessel, before it is made bright, is soiled with oil and other things, that it may scour the better. Oh, happy be you, that you be now in the scouring house ; for shortly you shall be set upon the celestial shelf as bright as angels. †

Therefore, my dear heart, I will now, according to your loving request, cast away all care, and rejoice with you and praise God for you, and pray for you day and night. Yea, I will now, with God's grace, sing psalms of praise and thanksgiving with you ; for now my soul is turned into her old rest again, and hath taken a sweet nap in Christ's lap. I have cast my care upon the Lord, which careth for me ; and will be *careless*, according to my name, in that respect which you would have me. I will leave out my unseemly addition as long as I live ; for it can take no place where true faith and hope is resident. So soon as I had read your most godly and comfortable letter, my sorrows vanished away as smoke

* Bedaubed.

† A play upon the word "angel," a silver coin.

in the wind, my spirit revived, and comfort came again ; whereby I am sure the Spirit of God was the author of it.

Oh, good Master Philpot, which art a principal pot indeed, filled with most precious liquor, as it appeareth by the plenteous pouring forth of the same : oh, pot most happy, of the high Potter ordained to honour, which dost contain such heavenly treasure in thy earthen vessel : oh, pot thrice happy, in whom Christ hath wrought a great miracle, altering thy nature and turning water into wine, and that of the best, whereout the master of the feast hath filled my cup so full, that I am become drunken in joy of the Spirit through the same. When martyrdom shall break thee (O vessel of honour), I know the fragrant savour of thy precious nard will much rejoice the heavy hearts of Christ's true members—although the Judases will grudge and murmur at the same, yea, and burst out into words of slander, saying, It is but lost and waste. Be not offended, dear heart, at my metaphorical speech ; for I am disposed to be merry, and with David to dance before the ark of the Lord ; and though you play upon a pair of organs * not very comely or easy to the flesh, yet the sweet sound that came from the same causeth me thus to do.

Oh that I were with you in body, as presently I am in spirit, that I might sing all care away in Christ ; for now the time of comfort is come. I hope to be with you shortly, if all things happen aright ; for my old friends of

* *i.e.* the stocks.

Coventry have put the council in remembrance of me not six days ago, saying that I am more worthy to be burnt than any that was burned yet. God's blessing on their hearts for their good report. God make me worthy of that dignity, and hasten the time, that I might set forth His glory. Pray for me, dear heart, I beseech you, and will * all your company to do the same; and I will pray God for you all so long as I live. And now farewell in Christ, thou blessed of God's own mouth; I will for a time take my leave, but not my last farewell. Blessed be the time that ever I came into the King's Bench, to be joined in love and fellowship with such dear children of the Lord. My good brother Bradford shall not be dead while you be alive; for verily the spirit of him doth rest on you in most ample wise. Your letters of comfort unto me in each point do agree, as though the one were a copy of the other. He hath planted in me, and you do water; the Lord give good increase. My dear brethren and fellow-prisoners here, have them humbly and heartily commended unto you and your company, mourning for your misery, but yet rejoicing for your plenteous consolation and comfort in Christ. We are all cheerful and merry under our cross, and do lack no necessities; praised be God for His providence, and great mercies towards us, for evermore. Amen.

JOHN CARELESS.

* Desire.

AN EXHORTATION TO A SISTER OF HIS

Constantly and cheerfully to stick to the truth, and to abide the trial of that doctrine which she had fruitfully professed.

God the eternal Father, who hath justified you by the blood of His Son Jesus Christ, and called you to hallow His name through a good conversation and profession of life, He sanctify you with daily increase of virtue and faith by His Holy Spirit, that you may appear a vessel of sanctification in the midst of this wicked and perverse generation, to the laud and praise of the Gospel. Amen.

I have occasion, mine own dear sister, to praise God in you for two causes : the one, that to your ability you are ready to show yourself a natural loving sister unto me your poor afflicted brother, as by your gentle tokens you have oftsoons* testified being absent, as also presently visiting me ; which well declareth that you be a very natural sister indeed, and to be praised in this behalf. But in the other, that you be also a sister to me in faith after Christ's Gospel, I am occasioned to thank God so much the more, how much the one excelleth the other, and the spiritual consanguinity is more perdurable than that which is of flesh and blood, and is a worker of that which is by nature—for commonly such as be ungodly, be unnatural and only lovers of them-

* From time to time.

selves, as daily experience teacheth us. The living Lord, which through the incorruptible seed of His Word hath begotten you to be my liege * sister, give you grace so to grow in that generation, that you may increase to a perfect age in the Lord, to be my sister with Christ for ever. Look, therefore, that you continue a faithful sister, as you are called and are godly entered, not only to me but to all the Church of Christ, yea, to Christ Himself, who voucheth you, in this your unfeigned faith, worthy to be His sister. Consider this dignity to surmount all the vain dignity of the world, and let it accordingly prevail more with you than all earthly delights ; for thereby you are called to an equal portion of the everlasting inheritance of Christ, if now in nowise you do show yourself an unnatural sister to Him in forsaking Him in trouble ; which I trust you will never, for no kind of worldly respect, do. You are under dangerous temptations to be turned from that natural love you owe unto Christ, and you shall be tried with God's people through a sieve of great affliction ; for so Satan desireth us to be sifted, that through fear of sharp troubles we might fall from the stableness of our faith, and so be deprived of that honour, joy, and reward which is prepared for such as continue faithful brothers and sisters in the Lord's covenant to the end. Therefore the Wise Man, in the Book of Ecclesiasticus, biddeth them that come to the service of the Lord, to prepare

* Attached, devoted.

themselves to suffer temptations. Since, then, that for the glory of God and our faith we are called now to abide the brunt of them, and that when our adversary hath done all that He can, yet we may be stable and stand : this Christ our first begotten Brother looketh for at our hands ; and all our brethren and sisters in heaven desire to see our faith through afflictions to be perfect, that we might fulfil their number ; and the Universal Church here militant rejoiceth at our constancy, whom all, by the contrary, we should make sorry, to the danger of the loss both of body and soul. Fear not, therefore, whatsoever be threatened of the wicked world : prepare your back, and see it ready to carry Christ's cross. And if you see any untowardness in you (as the flesh is continually repugnant to the will of God), ask with faithful prayer that the good Spirit of God may lead your sinful flesh whither it would not ; for if we will dwell in the flesh and follow the counsel thereof, we shall never do the will of God, neither work that tendeth to our salvation. You are at this present in the confines and borders of Babylon, where you are in danger to drink of the whore's cup, unless you be vigilant in prayer. Take heed the serpent seduce you not from the simplicity of your faith, as he did our first mother Eve. Let no worldly fellowship make you partaker of iniquity. He that toucheth tar cannot but be defiled thereby, and with such as be perverse a man shall soon be perverted ; with the holy you shall be holy. Therefore say continually, with the prophet David, Unto the saints which

be on the earth, all my will is on them. You have been sanctified and made pure through the truth ; take heed you be not unholy and defiled, lest the last be worse than the first.

I write not this because I stand in any doubt of your sincere continuance, of the which I have had so good experience ; but because the days be evil ; and in the same it is the duty of every one of us to exhort another. I am bold to put you, my good sister, in remembrance of that which doth not a little comfort me to remember in my troubles and daily temptations. Wherefore I doubt not, you will take that in good part which cometh from your brother both in spirit and body, who tendereth your salvation as earnestly as his own ; that we might joy together eternally, with such joy as the world shall never be able to take from us. Thanks be unto God, you have begun to run a good and great time well in the ways of the Lord ; run out the race to the end which you have begun, and then shall you receive the crown of glory. None shall be crowned but such as lawfully striveth. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good : and the Lord shall make you one of those faithful virgins that shall follow the Lamb wheresoever He goeth—the which Christ grant both you and me. Amen.

Commend me to all them that love me in the Lord unfeignedly. God increase our faith, and give us grace never to be ashamed of His Gospel. That same request which I have made to my brother Thomas I make also

to you ; desiring you, by all means you can, to accomplish my request that my sureties might be satisfied with that is mine own to the contentation of my mind, which cannot be quiet until they be discharged : therefore, I pray you, help to purchase quietness, that I might depart out of this world in peace. My dissolution I look for daily ; but the Lord knoweth how unworthy I am of so high an honour as to die for the testimony of His truth. Pray that God would vouchsafe to make me worthy, as He hath done, of long imprisonment—for the which His name be praised for ever. Pray and look for the coming of the Lord, whose wrath is great over us ; and I will pray for you as long as I live. The 9th of July, in the King's Bench.

Your own loving brother, as well in faith as in body,

JOHN PHILPOT.

TO MY DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER IN THE LORD,
MASTER ROBERT HARRINGTON.

GENTLE Master Harrington, I cannot tell what condign * thanks I may give unto God for you, in respect of that great gentleness and pain which you have taken for the relief of me and of other our afflicted brethren in Christ. God be praised for His mercy, whose loving providence we have seen towards us by such faithful stewards as you have been towards a great many. Blessed be you of God, for the loving care which you have taken for His poor flock. God hath reserved

* Suitable.

your reward of thanks in heaven ; and therefore I do not go about to render you any, lest I might seem to judge that you looked for that here, which is reserved to a better place.

I thank God, for that I have found by your faithful and diligent industry ; and God forgive me my unworthiness of so great benefits. God give me grace to serve Him faithfully, and to run out my race with joy. Glorious is the course of the martyrs of Christ at this day. Never had the elect of God a better time for their glory than this is : now may they be assured, under the cross, that they are Christ's disciples for ever. Methinks I see you desiring to be under the same ; the flesh draweth back, but the Spirit saith it must be brought whither it would not. Here is the victory of the world ; here is true faith and everlasting glory. Who is he which desireth not to be found faithful to his Master ? And now is the time that every faithful servant of Christ hath just opportunity to show himself a glorious soldier in the Lord's sight. Now do the Amalekites invade the true Israelites, that the Israelites might with speed be glorified. I need not, for want of understanding, to admonish you hereof, but, as a willing soldier in Christ, to exhort you so to run as you may gain the victory, and that speedily, with us. A man that is bid to a glorious feast, wisheth his friend to go with him and to be partaker thereof. God doth call me (most unworthy) among others to drink of the bride-cup of His Son ; whereby we shall

be made worthy, as many of our brethren have been before us, to sit at the right hand and at the left hand of Christ. Oh, what unspeakable condition is that! May any worldly thing stay us from the desire thereof? Since we seek the kingdom of God, why do we not apprehend it, being so near offered unto us? Let us approach near unto God, and God will draw near unto us. God draw us after Him, that we may all run after the savour of His sweet ointments. Christ anoint us, that we may be supplied in these evil days to run lightly unto the glory of the Lord. Shame, imprisonment, loss of goods, and shedding of our blood, be the just price which we must willingly bestow for the same. Wherefore, dearly beloved in the Lord, let not the great charges keep you back from buying this glory; for the reward is ten thousandfold greater than the price. That you have married a wife (whom God bless) I cannot excuse you from this mart; but you must bring your wife for a usury to the Lord, whose pleasure is in godly yoke-fellows. I wish you to be as I am—except these horrible bonds, but yet most comfortable to the spirit, assuring us that we are made worthy, through Christ, of the kingdom for the which we suffer.

Praised be the Lord for the affliction which we suffer, and He give us strength to continue to the end! Commend me to Master Heath, and tell him that I would wish him, with me, to prove how apt he is to carry the cross of Christ. I pray for his continuance 'in

Christ, as for mine own. Commend me to his wife and to Mistress Hall, certifying them that I am brought to the gates of hell, that I might never enter into the same, but be raised up from hell to heaven, through the word that sanctifieth us. Commend me to Master Elsing and his wife, and thank them that they remembered to provide me some ease in prison ; and tell them that though my lord's coal-house be but very black yet it is more to be desired of the faithful than the queen's palace. God make her a joyful mother, and preserve them both to the comfort of God's people. Thus for this time farewell, dear brother. Written in post haste, because of strait keeping.

This day I look to be called before the commissioners again. Pray, dear brother, for the Spirit of wisdom to remain with me. Commend me to your wife, and I thank you both for your tokens. Your token I have sent to your wife ; and my token unto you is my faithful heart with this letter. Commend me to all my friends ; and tell them, I thank God, I am cheerful in Christ, wishing them to fear God more than man, and to learn to despise earnestly the vanities of this world ; desiring you all to pray for me, that I may end my journey with fidelity. Amen.

JOHN PHILPOT.

TO MY BROTHER, JOHN CARELESS,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

THE grace of God the Father, through His dear Son

Christ our Saviour, with perseverance in all godly verity, be with thee, my dear brother Careless, and with all my prison-fellows. Amen.

Ah, my own love in Christ, I am sorry to hear of thy great trouble which these schismatics do daily put thee to. I would I were with thee, in part to relieve thy grief; but since that it hath pleased God otherwise, take my advice in this your conflict, and be patient whatsoever your adversaries can say or do against you. Know that you are appointed for the defence of the Gospel, for the which you (God be praised!) do suffer; yet you must understand that you are but a voice in the wilderness, and a planter, and that it is God which must give the increase. And therefore if there come not such fruit of your good labours as you would wish, be content, and know that a stony ground cannot fructify; yet shall not God forget your labour, but you shall reap as plentifully in the day of reward as though it had increased after your expectation. Have patience, therefore, in your labour, and let not care eat out your heart. Commit the success to God; and cease not with charity to be earnest in the defence of the truth against these arrogant and self-will blinded scatterers.

These sects are necessary for the trial of our faith and for the beautifying thereof. Be not perverted with them that be perverse and intractable; they resist not you, they resist Christ, and be workers against their own salvation. Show as much modesty and humility as you may possible: so shall your labour please God

best, and your adversaries receive the more shame ; and others, seeing your modest conversation amongst these contentious babblers, shall glorify God in His truth by you, and the more abhor them, as you see it hath come to pass in times past. Be content that Shimei do rail at David and cast stones awhile ; be sure his railing judgment will fall upon his own pate. Have always that notable rule of Christ's Church before your eyes, which St. Paul writeth ; that if anybody be contentious, neither we, neither the Church of God, hath any such custom.

Desire all our brethren in the bowels of Jesus Christ to keep the bond of peace, which is the unity of Christ's Church, where be all the treasures of spiritual consolation in heavenly things. Let no root of bitterness spring up, which the devil with all diligence seeketh to thrust in amongst the children of God. Kiss one another with the kiss of unfeigned brotherly love ; and take one another by the hand cheerfully, and say, Let us take up our cross together, and go to the Mount of Calvary, and there be willing to suffer whatsoever it pleaseth God we shall. Hitherto we have not resisted to blood-shedding. Our blood must not be too dear for the Lord, and then His kingdom shall not be too dear for us. Thus exhort one another to offer yourselves a joyful sacrifice unto God ; for this is that pleasant sacrifice wherewith His wrath shall be pacified, which is now kindled most justly against us. Be thankful unto God that it hath pleased Him to make you worthy

of this glorious affliction ; yea, and I pray you give thanks unto God for me, that it hath been His good will to take me, most filthy and unthankful sinner, to be one of this number. My joy of the love of God towards me in this behalf is such, that it maketh all my strait imprisonment to seem pleasure ; God be praised, I cannot be sorry though I would.

Oh how great is the love of God towards us ! Be merry, brethren, and rejoice continually in the Lord ; for the victory is ours, yea, heaven is ours, and all the glory thereof. Faint not, but run out, for we are even at an end. Be glad of nothing so much as in the mortification of the old Adam ; murmur not, in no case, whatsoever necessity you be in. Communicate your necessities to me and to others of His people, and God will make us to divide stakes. Be always praising God, talking, comforting, teaching, and exhorting in God, and He will not see you utterly destitute. I commend me to your faithful prayers all. And you, Careless, see that you be in my dungeon with me, as I am in spirit with you in the King's Bench, and with you all.

Thine own brother,

JOHN PHILPOT.

TO MISTRESS ANN HARTIPOLE,

Who was fallen from the sincerity of the Gospel, which she had before long known and professed, to the Pope and his idolatrous religion.

THE grace of God and true light, wherewith He lighteneth

the hearts of all the true and faithful believers, lovers, and followers of His Holy Gospel, lighten your heart by the mighty operation of His Holy Spirit. Amen.

I have not hitherto been accustomed to write unto you in the matters of our common faith, which is now dangerously assaulted, especially for that otherwise, by corporal presence and mutual conference, we have had consolation in the same, as the time present did require. In the which I perceived your judgment and constancy to be so much, that I received, by your good and godly example, strength in the same; as I have done even from the beginning, before I was called unto the light of the Gospel, in the which you went before me, and ministered occasion to me to follow, at such time as that blessed woman Ann Askew (now a glorious martyr in the fight of Jesus Christ) was harboured in your house; so that I thought it superfluous and not needful to write thereof unto you, that of so long time have been instructed, and by so many learned books confirmed. But now, hearing that the old serpent, our ancient enemy, which lieth in continual wait of our steps, hath bitten you by the heel and given you a foul fall, I cannot but be heartily sorry, and, as brotherly charity moveth me, testify the same unto you by writing, for that I may not presently otherwise open myself in this behalf.

Alas, sister, that so sincere profession should receive so gross an infection, to the dishonour of God and of His Church! What meaneth it that you are so suddenly departed from Jerusalem unto Jericho, to be a companion

of thieves and idolaters, to the utter overthrowing of that good which you have professed? for, as St. James teacheth us, he that offendeth in one is guilty in all; and to come to idolatry and strange worshipping of God, forbidden by His Word, is of all transgressions the most detestable. Therefore I cannot cease to wonder how you could so soon be allured or drawn thereto. I had thought the love of the truth had been so grafted in your heart, that neither persecution, sword, fire, nor gallows might have brought this to pass, that at the voice of a handmaid in the first temptation you should have denied Christ. For not to walk after the sincerity of His Gospel indeed, is to deny Him; and none can be partakers of the Lord's Table and of the table of devils, which is the popish mass, and the malignant synagogue using the same.

Methinks I hear your excuse, pretending your conscience to be sound before God notwithstanding; and that your conscience will give you leave thus to do, with the common sort of dissemblers both with God and man: but I must tell you plain, sister, in God's cause, that your conscience, so affected, is a sickly and unsound conscience, and craftily blinded; for before God there is no such conscience allowed, which alloweth your body to do that which it condemneth. We shall receive all according to that which we do in our bodies, whether it be good or evil; and it is commanded us as well to glorify God in our bodies as in our souls. We must show our faith by our outward conversation; that men, seeing our good works, might glorify our Father which is in heaven.

Will ye now with your presence go about to beautify that which hitherto you have justly destroyed? What do you else in so doing, but notify yourself to be an infidel to the Church of Christ, that will be content to associate yourself with her enemy, for the contentation of man? Hath ever any person of God so done, that was allowed therein? Be not deceived, good sister, with the persuasible words of man, neither be afraid of his threats. Follow the Gospel of Christ according to true knowledge; and fear to do that which by the same is straitly forbidden you. Tempt not God any longer by this evil doing, for you can do nothing, more heinous in His sight. Let this halting be healed up, and turn not from the right ways of the Lord. Be not ashamed of His Gospel, neither of the cross which is the badge of the true and unfeigned professions thereof, which you see now His faithful (praised be His name therefore!) are so well content and willing to bear: but rather, as you are called, take up your cross, and be assured thereby to enter into Christ's glory; for unless we suffer with Him, we shall not reign with Him, and if we die not with Christ, we shall not live with Christ. The cross now is the ready way to heaven; therefore I wish you should choose to be afflicted with the people of God, rather than to live in the tabernacles of the wicked. Do not any more that which, of all things, ye have now most cause to repent; neither lay daily the foundation of repentance, but let this fall be a teaching unto you of the want of faith which is in you; and so become more fervent in prayer and godly exer-

cises, that, with this new year, ye may become a new woman in a godly and new perfection : the which God, for His mercies' sake in Christ, work both in you and me to the end. Amen.

Written in haste, by your brother in captivity,
JOHN PHILPOT.

John Bradford.

JOHN BRADFORD was a native of Manchester. He received a good education, and then entered the service of Sir John Harrington, who acted as treasurer to the King's camp at Boulogne. As an accountant and writer, Bradford gained great proficiency, and throve well in the world : but becoming possessed with a desire to give up worldly matters and to devote himself more entirely to the service of God, he quitted London, and entered the University of Cambridge. Here he soon obtained his degree of Master of Arts, and also a fellowship at Pembroke College. Being much urged thereto, he at length consented to become a preacher, and was ordained Deacon of the Church of England by Dr. Ridley, then Bishop of London, who also made him a prebendary of St. Paul's. For three years all went well ; then, in the first year of Mary's reign, Dr. Browne, Bishop of Bath, preached a popish sermon at Paul's Cross, which caused such a tumult amongst the crowd that Browne himself asked Bradford to take his place in the pulpit and quiet the people. Bradford soon succeeded in getting the throng to disperse quietly, but within three days was sent for to the Tower, to appear before the Queen and Council. Then he was charged with sedition, and committed first to the Tower and then to the King's Bench, in Southwark, and subsequently to the Poultry Compter. In the last two places he preached twice daily. Bradford remained in prison from August 1553 to January 22nd, 1555, and was then brought up before the Commissioners. He was told that, "he had been justly imprisoned for his seditious behaviour at Paul's Cross," but that on condition of repentance he should now be pardoned. Bradford stoutly declined to confess himself guilty, and was at once recommitted to prison. Twice again did Bradford appear before his judges ; but as he steadily refused to conform to the Roman Catholic Church, he was excommunicated and handed

over to the Sheriffs of London. His condemnation took place on January 31st, and he was not removed to Newgate till the 1st of July following. Thinking thereby to avoid a tumult the authorities moved him to Newgate at about midnight; but late as it was, Cheapside and Newgate were thronged by a mourning crowd who had come to bid him farewell. At nine o'clock on the following morning, John Bradford was burnt to death at the stake in Smithfield.

TO HIS MOTHER,

A godly matron dwelling in Manchester; and to his brethren and sisters, and other of his friends there.

OUR dear and sweet Saviour Jesus Christ, whose prisoner at this present (praised be His name therefore!) I am, preserve and keep you, my good mother, with my brothers and sisters, my father John Traves, Thomas Sorrocold, Laurence and James Bradshaw, with their wives and families, etc., now and for ever. Amen.

I am at this present in prison, sure enough for starting,* to confirm that I have preached unto you: as I am ready, I thank God, with my life and blood to seal the same, if God vouch me worthy of that honour. For, good mother and brethren, it is a most special benefit of God to suffer for His name's sake and Gospel, as now I do: I heartily thank Him for it, and am sure that with Him I shall be partaker of His glory, as Paul saith, If we suffer with Him, we shall reign with Him. Therefore be not faint-hearted, but rather rejoice, at the least for my sake, which now am in the right and

* Secure from escaping.

high way to heaven : for by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. Now will God make known His children. When the wind doth not blow, then cannot a man know the wheat from the chaff ; but when the blast cometh, then flieth away the chaff, but the wheat remaineth ; and is so far from being hurt, that by the wind it is more cleansed from the chaff, and known to be wheat. Gold, when it is cast into the fire, is the more precious : so are God's children by the cross of affliction. Always God beginneth His judgment at His house. Christ and the apostles were in most misery in the land of Jewry, but yet the whole land smarted for it after ; so now, God's children are first chastised in this world, that they should not be damned with the world—for surely great plagues of God hang over this realm. Ye all know there was never more knowledge of God and less godly living and true serving of God. It was counted a foolish thing to serve God truly, and earnest prayer was not passed upon.* Preaching was but a pastime. The communion was counted too common. Fasting, to subdue the flesh, was far out of use. Alms was almost nothing. Malice, covetousness, and uncleanness were common everywhere, with swearing, drunkenness, and idleness. God therefore now is come, as you have heard me preach ; and because He will not damn us with the world, He beginneth to punish us—as me for my carnal living. For as

* Valued.

for my preaching, I am most certain it is and was God's truth, and I trust to give my life for it by God's grace : but because I lived not the gospel truly but outwardly, therefore doth He thus punish me ; nay rather, in punishing bless me. And indeed I thank Him more of this prison than of any parlour, yea, than of any pleasure that ever I had : for in it I find God my most sweet good God always. The flesh is punished, first, to admonish us now heartily to live as we profess ; secondly, to certify the wicked of their just damnation, if they repent not.

Perchance you are infirmed and weakened of that which I have preached, because God doth not defend it, as you think, but suffereth the old Popish doctrine to come again and prevail ; but you must know, good mother, that God by this doth prove and try His children and people, whether they will unfeignedly and simply hang on Him and His Word. So did He with the Israelites ; bringing them into a desert, after their coming out of Egypt, where (I mean the wilderness) was want of all things in comparison of that which they had in Egypt. Christ, when He came into this world, brought no worldly wealth nor quietness with Him, but rather war ; The world, saith He, shall rejoice, but ye shall mourn and weep, but your weeping shall be turned into joy : and therefore happy are they that mourn and weep, for they shall be comforted. They are marked, then, with God's mark in their foreheads, and not with the beast's mark—I mean the pope's shaven crown, who

now with his shavelings rejoice ; but woe unto them, for they shall be cast down, they shall weep and mourn. The rich glutton had here his joy, and Lazarus sorrow ; but afterwards the time was changed. The end of carnal joy is sorrow. Now let the whoremonger joy, with the drunkard, swearer, covetous, malicious, and blind buzzard Sir John : for the mass will not bite them, neither make them to blush, as preaching would. Now may they do what they will, come devils to the church and go devils home, for no man must find fault. And they are glad of this ; now have they their heart's desire, as the Sodomites had when Lot was gone—but what followed ? Forsooth, when they cried, Peace, all shall be well, then came God's vengeance, fire and brimstone from heaven, and burnt up every mother's child ; even so, dear mother, will it do to our papists.

Wherefore fear God : stick to His Word, though all the world would swerve from it. Die you must once ; and when, or how, you cannot tell. Die therefore with Christ, suffer for serving Him truly, and after His Word ; for sure may we be, that of all deaths, it is most to be desired to die for God's sake. This is the most safe kind of dying : we cannot doubt but that we shall go to heaven, if we die for His name's sake. And that you shall die for His name's sake, God's Word will warrant you, if you stick to that which God by me hath taught you. You shall see that I speak as I think ; for, by God's grace, I will drink before you of this cup, if I be put to it. I doubt not but God will give me His grace,

and strengthen me thereunto : pray that He would, and that I refuse it not. I am at a point,* even when my Lord God will, to come to Him. Death nor life, prison nor pleasure, I trust in God, shall be able to separate me from my Lord God and His Gospel. In peace, when no persecution was, then were you content and glad to hear me : then did you believe me—and will you not do so now ; seeing I speak that which I trust, by God's grace, if need be, to verify with my life ? Good mother, I write before God to you, as I have preached before Him. It is God's truth I have taught ; it is that same infallible word, whereof He hath said, Heaven and earth shall pass, but My word shall not pass. The mass, and such baggage as the false worshippers of God and enemies of Christ's cross (the papists, I say) have brought in again to poison the Church of God withal, displeases God highly, and is abominable in His sight. Happy may he be, which of conscience suffereth loss of life or goods in disallowing it. Come not at it. If God be God, follow Him ; if the mass be God, let them that will see it, hear, or be present at it, go to the devil with it. What is there as God ordained ? His Supper was ordained to be received of us in the memorial of His death, for the confirmation of our faith that His body was broken for us, and His blood shed for pardon of our sins ; but in the mass there is no receiving, but the priest keepeth

* My mind is made up.

all to himself alone. Christ saith, Take, eat ; No, saith the priest, gape, peep. There is a sacrificing, yea, killing of Christ again, as much as they may. There is idolatry in worshipping the outward sign^e of bread and wine. There is all in Latin ; you cannot tell what he saith. To conclude, there is nothing as God ordained ; wherefore, my good mother, come not at it.

"Oh," will some say, "it will hinder you * if you refuse to come to mass and to do as others do." But God will further you, be you assured, as you shall one day find ; who hath promised to them that suffer hindrance or loss of any thing in this world His great blessing here, and in the world to come life everlasting. "You shall be counted a heretic ;" but not of others than of heretics, whose praise is a dispraise. "You are not able to reason against the priests ;" but God will, that † all they shall not be able to withstand you. "Nobody will do so but you only ;" indeed, no matter, for few enter into the narrow gate which bringeth to salvation. Howbeit, you shall have with you, I doubt not, Father Traves, and others my brothers and sisters, to go with you therein : but if they will not, I, your son in God, I trust, shall not leave you an inch, but go before you ; pray that I may, and give thanks for me. Rejoice in my suffering, for it is for your sakes, to confirm the truth I have taught. Howsoever you do, beware this letter come not abroad, but unto Father Traves's hands ;

* Be for your disadvantage.

† So that.

for if it should be known that I have pen and ink in the prison, then would it be worse with me. Therefore to yourselves keep this letter, commending me to God and His mercy in Christ Jesus, who make me worthy, for His name's sake, to give my life for His Gospel and Church's sake.—Out of the Tower of London, the 6th day of October, 1553.

My name I write not ; for causes—you know it well enough ; like the letter never the worse. Commend me to all our good brethren and sisters in the Lord. Howsoever you do, be obedient to the higher powers ; that is, in no point, either in hand or tongue, rebel, but rather, if they command that which with good conscience you cannot obey, lay your head on the block, and suffer whatsoever they shall do or say. By patience possess your souls.

TO MISTRESS M. H.,

A godly Gentlewoman ; comforting her in that common heaviness and godly sorrow which the feeling and sense of sin worketh in God's children.

I HUMBLY and heartily pray the ever-living good God and Father of mercy, to bless and keep your heart and mind in the knowledge and love of His truth and of His Christ, through the inspiration and working of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Although I have no doubt but that you prosper and go forwards daily in the way of godliness, more and more drawing towards perfection, and have no

need of anything that I can write, yet because my desire is that you might be more fervent and persevere to the end, I could not but write something unto you ; beseeching you both often and diligently to call unto your mind, as a mean to stir you hereunto, yea, as a thing which God most straitly requireth you to believe, that you are beloved of God, and that He is your dear Father in, through, and for Christ and His death's sake. This love and tender kindness of God towards us in Christ is abundantly herein declared, in that He hath (to * that godly † work of creation of this world) made us after His image, redeemed us being lost, called us into His Church, sealed us with His mark and sign-manual of baptism, kept and conserved us all the days of our life, fed, nourished, defended, and most fatherly chastised us, and now hath kindled in our hearts the sparkles of His fear, faith, love, and knowledge of His Christ and truth : and therefore we lament, because we lament no more our unthankfulness, our frailness, our diffidence and wavering, in things wherein we should be most certain. All these things we should use as means to confirm our faith of this, that God is our God and Father, and to assure us that He loveth us as our Father in Christ ; to this end, I say, we should use the things before touched ; especially, in that ‡ of all things God requireth this faith and persuasion of His Fatherly goodness, as His chieftest service. For

* Beside.

† Godlike.

‡ Since.

before He ask anything of us, He saith, I am the Lord thy God—giving Himself, and then all He hath, to us, to be our own. And this He doth in respect of Himself, of His own mercy and truth, and not in respect of us, for then were grace no grace. In consideration whereof, when He saith, Thou shalt have none other gods but me, thou shalt love Me with all Thy heart, etc. ; though of duty we are bound to accomplish all that He requireth, and are culpable and guilty if we do not the same, yet He requireth not these things further of us than to make us more in love and more certain of this His covenant, that He is our Lord and God. In certainty whereof, as He hath given this whole world to serve to our need and commodity,* so hath He given His Son Christ Jesus, and, in Christ, Himself, to be a pledge and gage ; whereof the Holy Ghost doth now and then give us some taste and sweet smell, to our eternal joy.

Therefore, as I said, because God is your father in Christ, and requireth of you straitly to believe it, give yourself to obedience, although you do it not with such feeling as you desire. First must faith goes before, and then feeling will follow. If our imperfection, frailty, and many evils should be occasions whereby Satan would have us to doubt, as much as we can let us abhor that suggestion, as of all others most pernicious—for so indeed it is. For when we stand in a doubt

* Convenience.

whether God be our father, we cannot be thankful to God, we cannot heartily pray, or think anything we do acceptable to God, we cannot love our neighbours and give over ourselves to care for them and do for them as we should do ; and therefore Satan is most subtle hereabouts, knowing full well, that if we doubt of God's fatherly eternal mercies towards us through Christ, we cannot please God, or do anything as we should do to man ; continually casteth he into our memories our imperfection, frailty, faults, and offences ; that we should doubt of God's mercy and favour towards us. Therefore, my good sister, we must not be sluggish herein ; but as Satan laboureth to loosen our faith, so must we labour to fasten it, by thinking on the promises and covenant of God in Christ's blood—namely, that God is our God, with all that ever He hath : which covenant dependeth and hangeth upon God's own goodness, mercy, and truth only, and not on our obedience or worthiness in any point ; for then should we never be certain. Indeed, God requireth of us obedience and worthiness, but not that thereby we might be His children and He our Father ; but because He is our father, and we His children, through His own goodness in Christ, therefore requireth He faith and obedience. Now if we want * this obedience and worthiness which He requireth, should we doubt whether He be our father ? Nay, that were to make our obedience and worthiness

* Have not.

the cause ; and so to put Christ out of place, for whose sake God is our father. But rather, because He is our father, and we feel ourselves to want such things as He requireth, we should be stirred up to a shamefacedness and blushing, because we are not as we should be ; and thereupon should we take occasion to go to our Father in prayer, on this manner : Dear Father, Thou of Thine own mercy in Christ hast chosen me to be Thy child, and therefore thou wouldest I should be brought into Thy Church and faithful company of Thy children, wherein Thou hast kept me hitherto—Thy name therefore be praised ! Now I see myself to want faith, hope, love, etc., which Thy children have, and Thou requirest of me ; wherethrough * the devil would have me to doubt, yea, utterly to despair of Thy fatherly goodness, favour, and mercy. Therefore I come to Thee, as to my merciful Father through thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and pray Thee to help me. Good Lord, help me, and give me faith, hope, love, etc. ; and grant that Thy Holy Spirit may be with me for ever, and more and more to assure me that Thou art my father ; that this merciful covenant Thou madest with me, in respect of Thy grace in Christ, and for Christ, and not in respect of any my worthiness, is always true to me, etc.

On this sort, I say, you must pray and use your cogitations, when Satan would have you to doubt of salvation. He doth all he can to prevail herein : do you

* Whereby.

all you can to prevail herein against him. Though you feel not as you would, yet doubt not ; but hope beyond all hope, as Abraham did. Faith always, as I said, goeth before feeling. As certain as God is almighty, as certain as God is merciful, as certain as God is true, as certain as Christ was crucified, is risen, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father, as certain as this is God's commandment, *I am the Lord thy God*, so certain ought you to be that God is your Father. As you are bound to have none other gods but Him, so are you no less bound to believe that God is your God. What profit should it be to you to believe this to be true, *I am the Lord thy God*, to others, if you should not believe that this is true to yourself? The devil believeth on this sort. And whatsoever it be that would move you to doubt of this, whether God be your God through Christ, that same cometh undoubtedly of the devil. Wherefore did God make you, but because He loved you? Might not He have made you blind, dumb, deaf, lame, frantic, etc.? Might not He have made you a Jew, a Turk, a papist, etc.? And why hath He not done so? merely because He loved you. And why did He love you? What was there in you to move Him to love you? Surely nothing moved Him to love you, and therefore to make you, and so hitherto to keep you, but His own goodness in Christ. Now then in that * His goodness in Christ still remaineth as much

* Since.

as it was (that is, even as great as Himself, for it cannot be lessened), how should it be but that He is your God and Father? Believe this, believe this, my good sister: for God is no changeling; them whom He loveth He loveth to the end.

Cast therefore yourself wholly upon Him; and think, without at all wavering, that you are God's child, that you are a citizen of heaven, that you are the daughter of God, the temple of the Holy Ghost, etc. If hereof you be assured, as you ought to be, then shall your conscience be quieted; then shall you lament more and more that you want many things which God loveth; then shall you labour to be holy in soul and body; then shall you go about that God's glory may shine in you, in all your words and works; then shall you not be afraid what man can do unto you; then shall you have such wisdom to answer your adversaries, as shall serve to their shame and your comfort; then shall you be certain that no man can touch one hair of your head further than shall please your good Father to your everlasting joy; then shall you be most certain that God, as your good Father, will be more careful for your children, and make better provision for them, if all you have were gone, than you can; then shall you (being assured, I say, of God's favour towards you) give over yourself wholly to help and care for others that be in need; then shall you condemn this life, and desire to be at home with your good and sweet Father; then shall you labour to mortify all things

that would spot either soul or body. All these things spring out of this certain persuasion and faith that God is our Father, and we are His children by Christ Jesus. All things should help our faith herein: but Satan goeth about in all things to hinder us. Therefore let us use earnest and hearty prayer. Let us often remember this covenant, *I am the Lord thy God*; let us look upon Christ and His precious blood, shed for the oblation* and confirmation of this covenant. Let us remember all the free promises of the Gospel. Let us set before us God's benefits generally, in making this world, in ruling it, in governing it, in calling and keeping His Church, etc. Let us set before us God's benefits particularly, how He hath made us creatures after His image; how He hath made us of perfect limbs, form, beauty, memory, etc.; how He hath made us Christians, and given us a right judgment in His religion; how He hath, ever since we were born, blessed, kept, nourished, and defended us; how He hath often beaten, chastised, and fatherly corrected us; how He hath spared us, and doth now spare us, giving us time, space, place, grace. This if you do, and use earnest prayer, and so fly from all things which might wound your conscience, giving yourself to diligence in your vocation, you shall find at the length (that which God grant to me with you!) a sure certainty of salvation, without all such doubt as may trouble

* Sealing.

the peace of conscience, to your eternal joy and comfort,
Amen, amen.

Yours to use in Christ,
JOHN BRADFORD.

TO MISTRESS J. H.,

A faithful woman and fearing God ; whom he exhorteth
to be patient under the cross, and not to fear death.

My dearly beloved, I beseech our merciful Father to
comfort your heavy and pensive heart with His own con-
solations in Christ, as I am assured He will in His good
time ; which with patience look for, good sister, after the
example of Job, Elias, Abraham, and all the dear saints
of God, which are set forth unto us for patterns of
patience : God grant us well to cut our cloth after them ;
for God is the same God now, and the end will show
that He is a merciful Lord, and full of compassion. My
dear sister, you shall unfeignedly feel it at the length,
though presently it seemeth otherwise unto your sense :
you shall, after you be a little exercised herein, find a
quiet fruit of righteousness ; the God of grace, which hath
called you unto His eternal glory, confirming and
strengthening you, being some deal afflicted with your
brethren and sisters that be in the world ; for alone you
suffer not, as I trust you know.

It comforteth me to read in your letters, that no dis-
pleasure of father, mother, husband, children, etc., doth
move you to be ruled after the counsel of the world ; and

therefore you will* me not to be afraid for you. Oh, my beloved, what thanks should I give to our God and dear Father, for this His exceeding kindness towards you ! His name be magnified for you for ever : His mercy be more and more multiplied unto you, in you, and upon you, for ever and ever. Amen. God make me thankful therefore. But you add, that the fear of death doth now and then move you a little. Howbeit you say, that, as I have counselled you, you will strive thereagainst. My good Joyce, I take you at your word ; keep promise, I pray you ; that is, strive against it : and I promise you in the name of the Lord, that you shall have the victory, which I would wish you to set before your eyes also, and so shall the terror of death trouble you the less. Soldiers, going to war, set not before their eyes simply the strife, but rather the victory : and, my good sister, will you not herein follow them ? In your travail with child, doth not the hope of the babe to be delivered mitigate the malady ? Doth not the sick, in taking bitter and loathsome physic, set before him the commodity† which will ensue. And, my dear sister, will not you by these be something informed ? Consider what this life is : consider what death is : consider what is prepared for you after death. Concerning this life, you know that it is full of misery, vanity, and woe : it is a plain exile, and hath nothing in it permanent. It is therefore compared to a vapour, to a smoke, to a shadow, yea, to a warfare, a wilderness, a

* Desire.

† Advantage.

vale of wretchedness, wherein we are compassed on every side with most fierce and fearful enemies : and should we desire to dwell here ? Should we lust to live in this loathsome and laborious life ? Should we wish to tarry in this wretchedness ? Should we have pleasure to remain in this perilous state ? Daniel's den is not so dreadful as is this dungeon we dwell in.

Concerning death to them that be (as I know you are) God's dear children, my tenderly beloved sister, what other thing is it than the despatcher of all displeasure, the end of all travail, the door of desires, the gate of gladness, the port of paradise, the haven of heaven, the rail of rest and quietness, the entrance to felicity, the beginning of all blissfulness ? It is the very bed of down (and therefore well compared to a sleep), for the doleful bodies of God's people to rest in out of the which they shall rise and awake, most fresh and lusty, to life everlasting. It is a passage to the Father, a chariot to heaven, the Lord's messenger, a leader 'unto Christ, a going to our home, a deliverance from bondage and prison, a dismissal from war, a security from all sorrows, and a manumission from all misery. So that the very heathen did in some places cause the days of their death to be celebrated with mirth, melody, and minstrels : and should we be dismayed at it ? should we be afraid of it ? should we tremble to hear of it ? Should such a friend as it is be unwelcome ? Should the foulness of his face fear* us

* Frighten.

from his good conditions? * Should the hardness of his husk hinder us from his sweet kernel? Should the roughness of the tide tie us to the bank and shore, there to be drowned, rather than the desire of our home drive us to go abroad? Should the hardness of the saddle set us on our feet to perish by the way, rather than to leap up and endure the same a little, and so to be where we would be?

Concerning that which is prepared for you after death, if I should go about to express it, the more I should so do, the further I should be from it. For the eye hath not seen, neither the ear hath heard, nor the heart of man is able to conceive in any point, the joy, mirth, melody, pleasure, power, wealth, riches, honour, beauty, fellowship, dainties, odours, glory, wisdom, knowledge, treasures, security, peace, quietness, and eternal felicity, which you shall have and enjoy world without end, with God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, with the angels, archangels, with the patriarchs and prophets, with the apostles and evangelists, with the martyrs and confessors, and with all the saints of God, in the palace of the Lord in heaven, the kingdom of God, the glory of the Father. Oh, woe to the blindness of our eyes that see not this. Woe to the hardness of our hearts that feel not this. Woe to the deafness of our ears that hear not this, in such sort as we should do: wherethrough we might be so far from fearing death, that rather we should

* Excellences.

wish it, crying with Simeon, Now let Thy servant depart in peace ; with Paul, I desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ ; with David, When shall I come and appear before Thee ? and again, Oh woe is me, that my habitation is thus prolonged, etc. But, alas ! dear sister, great is our unbelief. Full faint is our faith, or else night and day tears should be our bread and drink, whilst it is said unto us, Where is your God ? It is a token of little love to God to be loth to go unto Him when He calleth. If my dearest friend, of a special favour and tender good will, should send a horse for me to come unto him, should I be displeased thereat ? yea should I not be willing and glad to come unto him ? And, alas ! yet if death, the Lord's palfrey, the Lord's messenger, should come, I think I should not be so ready, but be fearful—as you foresee yourself to be. Wherethrough I doubt not but you take occasion to lament the weakness of your faith, and, seeing your need, to prepare for remedy against the time of need, and to beg of God His aid, strength, and comfort against that pinch ; which undoubtedly you shall have, and find His promise true, that in an acceptable time He heard your prayer. Such as I am, have no such foresight of death, and therefore are less presently dismayed : which will turn to our greater grief in the plunge ; save that, for my part, I hope He will never tempt me further than He will make me able to bear. Into His hands I offer myself, beseeching Him for His Christ's sake to keep me soul and body to His kingdom and glory, and to lead me, order me, and dispose me as He will in all

things, in all places, and for ever ; that at the length I may come whither I will, that is, into His own blessed presence and fruition of immortality, with you and His saints. Amen. Thus much I thought good to write unto you for this present, to occasion you the less to fear death, which either needeth not or booteth not : and therefore even reasonable men, much more spiritual men, labour to strive against the fear of that which they can by no means avoid. But of this hereafter I trust mouth to mouth to speak with you. Now, as to my soul, I pray and wish unto you, my most dear sister in the Lord ; whose grace guide you, and His mercy embrace you on every side, for ever. Amen.

Yours,

JOHN BRADFORD.

TO MISTRESS WILKINSON.

ALMIGHTY GOD our most loving Father increase in your heart, my good mother and dear mistress in the Lord, His true knowledge and love in Christ, to the encouraging and comforting of your faith in these stormy days ; as necessary unto us, so profitable, if we persist unto the end—which thing God grant to us ! Amen.

My right dearly beloved, I know not what other thing to write unto you, than to desire you to be thankful unto the Lord, in that, amongst the not many of your calling and state, it pleaseth Him to give you His rare blessing ; I mean, to keep you from all the filth wherewith our country is horribly defiled. This blessing assuredly is

rare, as you see. But now, if He shall bless you with another blessing which is more rare, I mean to call you forth as a martyr, and as a witness against this filth, I hope you will become double thankful. For a greater token commonly we have not, to judge of our election and salvation, next to Christ and faith in Him, than the cross: especially when it is so glorious, as on this sort to suffer anything, but chiefly loss of this life, which indeed is never found till it be so lost; except the grain of wheat fall and be dead, it remaineth fruitless. You know how that he which was rapt into the third heaven, and did know what he wrote, doth say, that as the corn liveth not except it be dead and cast into the earth, so truly our bodies. And therefore the cross should so little fear * us, that even death itself should altogether be desired of us, as the tailor which putteth off our rags, and arrayeth us with the royal robes of immortality, incorruption, and glory. Great shame it should be for us, that all the whole creatures of God should desire, yea, groan in their kind for our liberty, and we ourselves to loth it: as doubtless we do, if for the cross, yea, for death itself, we with joy swallow not up all sorrow that might let† us from following the Lord's calling, and obeying the Lord's providence; whereby doubtless all crosses and death itself doth come, and not by hap or chance. In consideration whereof, right dear mother, in that this providence stretcheth itself so unto

* Frighten.

† Hinder.

us and for us, that even the hairs of our heads are numbered with God, not one of them to fall to our hurt; surely we declare ourselves very faint in faith, if we receive not such comfort, that we can willingly offer ourselves to the Lord, and cast our whole care upon His back, honouring Him with this honour, that He is and ever will be careful for us and all we have, as for His dear children. Be therefore of good cheer, even in the midst of these miseries; be thankful to the Lord, and prepare yourself for a further trial; which if God send you, as I hope, so do you believe, that God therein will help and comfort you, and make you able to bear whatsoever shall happen. And thus much, having this opportunity, I thought good to write; praying God our Father to recompense into your bosom all the good that ever you have done, to me especially, and to many others, both in this time of trouble and always heretofore.

Your own in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

TO MISTRESS WILKINSON.

THE Lord of mercy, in Christ His Son our Saviour and only Comforter, be with you all now and for ever. Amen.

Although presently I have little time, by reason of this bringer's short departing, and less occasion of necessary matter to write unto you; yet in that it hath pleased God to offer me more liberty to write than before I had (as this reader can report), I thought good to signify

unto you the same, with the acknowledging of the receipt of your tokens ; for the which I neither can nor will go about to flatter you with thanks, in that I know you look for none at mine hands, God being the cause and His Word the end wherefore you did so. To Him, I know, you would have me thankful ; and I beseech you pray that I may so be ; and not only thankful for myself and His benefits towards me, but also thankful for you, to whom God hath given to fear His name and love His truth. The which gifts far pass the riches of the world : for they shall perish, and be left we know not unto whom ; but these gifts of God, as they last for ever, so they make happy the possessors of the same. Go to, therefore, and pray God to increase them of His goodness, as of His mercy He hath begun them in you ; and indeed so He will. For to whom He giveth the earnest of willing, to the same He will give the grace of continuing, if we reject not the same ; as we do when we be double-hearted, and part our fear and love, as did the Samaritans, which feared God and their Adrammelech, loved God's religion and their old country customs, etc. If this doubleness come on us, that we fear more the world and couple it with the fear of God ; if we love the muck of this world and couple it with the love of God's religion ; then part we stake,* then mar we the market, then the spirit of God will depart, then play we as Ananias and Sapphira did, and so sooner or later shall fall to per-

* We attempt to compound with God.

•

dition with them. But, as I said, I think no such thing of you : I think of you as of God's dear children, whose hearts are whole with the Lord. And therefore I write not this as though you were such, but because it is God's goodness you be not such, because Satan would have you such, and because many that were as you now be are such. Therefore to make you as thankful, so careful to continue, but yet so that your care be cast all on the Lord, is the only cause I write this—and would write more, but that the bringer cannot tarry. And therefore hastily and abruptly I make an end ; beseeching Almighty God, in our Redeemer Jesus Christ, to be with you, and with His Holy Spirit comfort you all, and help my good sister, Mistress W., to be a happy and a good mother of the child, of which as yet I hear God hath not delivered her.

By your own to use in the Lord for ever,

JOHN BRADFORD.

TO MY DEAR FATHERS,

Doctor Cranmer, Doctor Ridley, Doctor Latimer, prisoners in Oxford for the testimony of the Lord Jesus and His holy Gospel.

ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father, more and more kindle our hearts and affections with His love ; that our greatest cross may be to be absent from Him and strangers from our home, and that we may godly contend more and more to please Him. Amen.

As always I have had great cause to praise our dear Father through Christ, so methinks I have more and more, in seeing more likely the end of my life (which is due for my sin) to be, through the exceeding grace of Christ, a testimony of God's truth. Thus the Lord dealeth not with everybody; not that everybody hath not more deserved at God's hands than I, which have deserved more vengeance than any other I know of my time and state; but that by me I hope the Lord will make the riches of His grace, to His glory, to be seen more excellent. With me therefore I humbly beseech you all, my most dear fathers in God, to give thanks for me; and, as you do, still to pray for me that the Lord, as for His love's sake in Christ, He hath begun His good work in me, even so, of and for the same His love's sake in Christ, He would make it perfect, and make me continue to the end—as I hope He will, for His mercy and truth endureth for ever.

As for your parts, in that it is commonly thought your staff standeth next to the door, ye have the more cause to rejoice and be glad, as they which shall come to your fellows under the altar: to the which society God, with you, bring me also in His mercy, when it shall be His good pleasure.—I have received many good things from you, my good lord, master, and dear father; N. Ridley; fruits, I mean, of your godly labours. All which I send unto you again by this bringer: one thing except, which he can tell, I do keep, upon your further pleasure to be known therein.

And herewithal I send unto you a little treatise which I have made, that you might peruse the same ; and not only you, but also ye, my other most dear and reverend fathers in the Lord for ever, to give to it your approbation as ye may think good. All the prisoners hereabouts, in manner, have seen it and read it ; and as therein they agree with me, nay rather with the truth, so they are ready, and will be, to signify it, as they shall see you give them example. The matter may be thought not so necessary as I seem to make it. But yet if ye knew the great evil that is like hereafter to come to the posterity by these men, as partly this bringer can signify unto you, surely then could ye not but be most willing to put hereto your helping hands. The which thing that I might more occasion you to perceive, I have sent you here a writing of Harry Hart's own hand ; whereby ye may see how Christ's glory and grace is like to lose much light, if that your sheep *quondam* be not something holpen by them which love God, and are able to prove that all good is to be attributed only and wholly to God's grace and mercy in Christ, without other respect of worthiness than Christ's merits. The effects of salvation they so mingle and confound with the cause, that if it be not seen to, more hurt will come by them than ever came by the papists ; inasmuch as their life commendeth them to the world more than the papists. God is my witness, that I write not this but because I would God's glory, and the good of His people. In free-will they are plain Papists, yea, Pelagians: and ye know that modicum,

Fermenti totam massam corrumpit. They utterly condemn all learning.* But hereof shall this bringer show you more. As to the chief captains therefore of Christ's Church here, I complain of it unto you : as truly I must do of you even unto God in the last day, if ye will not, as ye can, help something *ut veritas doctrinæ maneat apud posteros* in this behalf ; as ye have done on the behalf of matters expugned by the papists. God for His mercy in Christ guide you, my most dearly beloved fathers, with His Holy Spirit, here and in all other things, as most may make to His glory and the commodity of His Church. Amen.

All here, God therefore be praised, prepare themselves willingly to pledge our captain Christ, even when He will and how He will. By your good prayers we shall all fare the better, and therefore we all pray you to continue to cry to God for us, as we, God willing, do and will remember you. My brethren, here with me, have thought it their duty to signify this need to be no less than I make it, to prevent the plantations which may take root by these men.

Yours in the Lord,

ROBERT FERRAR, JOHN BRADFORD,
ROWLAND TAYLOR, JOHN PHILPOT.

* This is well-known to all those which have had to do with them, in disputations or otherwise ; for the writings and authority of the learned they have utterly rejected and despised.

TO MASTER JOHN HALL AND HIS WIFE,

Prisoners in Newgate for the testimony of the Gospel.

ALMIGHTY GOD, our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, be with you both, my dearly beloved, as with His dear children for ever; and He so bless you with His Holy Spirit, that you may in this your cross, for His cause doubtless, rejoice, and gladly take it up, to bear it so long as He shall think good. I have heard, my good brother and sister, how that God hath brought you both into His school-house (whereas you were both purposed, by His leave, to have played the truants), that thereby you might see His carefulness and love towards you. For if it be a token of a loving and careful father for his children, to prevent the purpose and disappoint the intent of his children, purposing to depart a while from the school for fear of beating; which thing they would not do, if they did as much consider the commodity * of learning which there they might get; how should you take this work of the Lord, preventing your purpose, but as an evident sign of love and fatherly carefulness that He beareth towards you? If He should have winked at your wiles, then would you have escaped beating, I mean the cross; but then should you have lost the commodity * of learning, which your Father will now have you to learn and feel, and therefore hath He sent to you His cross. He, I say, hath brought you where you be; and though

* Advantage.

your reason and wit will tell you it is by chance or fortune or otherwise, yet, my dearly beloved, know for certain, that whatsoever was the mean, God your Father was the worker hereof; and that for your weal, although otherwise your old Adam doth tell you, and you feel: yet, I say of truth, that your duty is to think of this cross, that, as it is of God's sending and cometh from Him, so, although your deserts be otherwise, it is of love and fatherly affection, for your weal and commodity's * sake.

What commodity is hereby? you will perchance object. You are now kept in close prison you will say; your family and children be without good overseers; your substance diminisheth by these means; poverty will approach, and perchance more perils also, as loss of life, etc.; these are no commodities but discommodities, and that no small ones; so that justly you would be glad to know what commodity can come to you by this cross, whereby cometh so great discommodities.

To these things I answer, that indeed it is true you say of your bodies, families, children, substance, poverty, life, etc.; which things, if you would consider awhile with inward eyes, as you behold them with outward, then perhaps you should find more ease. Do not you now by the inward sense perceive that you must part from all these, and all other commodities in the world? Tell me then, have not you this commodity by your cross, to learn to let the world, and to long for and

* Advantage.



JOHN BRADFORD.

desire another world where is perpetuity? You ought of your own head and free-will to have, according to your profession in baptism, forsaken the world and all earthly things, using the world as though you used it not, your heart only set upon your hoard in heaven; or else you could never be Christ's true disciples, that is, be saved, and be where He is. And trow you, my good hearts in the Lord, trow you, I say, that this is no commodity, by this cross to be compelled hereto, that you might assuredly enjoy with the Lord endless glory? How now doth God, as it were, fatherly pull you by the ears, to remember your former offences concerning these things and all other things, that repentance and remission might ensue! How doth God now compel you to call upon Him, and to be earnest in prayer! Are these no commodities? Doth not the Scripture say, that God doth correct us in the world, because we shall not be damned with the world? that God chasteneth every one whom He loveth? that the end of this correction shall be joy and holiness? Doth not the Scripture say, that they are happy that suffer for righteousness' sake, as you now do? that the glory and Spirit of God is upon them? that as you are now made like unto Christ in suffering, so you shall be made like to Him in reigning? Doth not the Scripture say, that you are now going the high and right way to heaven? that your suffering is Christ's suffering?

My dearly beloved, what greater commodities * than these can a godly heart desire? Therefore ye are com-

* Advantages.

manded to rejoice and be glad when ye suffer, as now ye do ; for, through the goodness of God, great shall be your reward. Where? Forsooth on earth, first, for your children : for now they are in God's mere * and immediate protection. Never was father so careful for his children, as God is for yours presently. God's blessing, which is more worth than all the world, you leave in deed to your children. Though all your providence for them should be pulled away, yet God is not poor ; He hath promised to provide for them most fatherly. Cast thy burden upon Me, saith He, and I will bear it. Do you therefore cast them and commend them unto God your Father, and doubt not that He will die in your debt. He never yet was found unfaithful, and He will not now begin with you. The good man's seed shall not go begging his bread ; for He will show mercy upon thousands of the posterity of them that fear Him. Therefore, as I said, God's reward first upon earth shall be felt by your children, even corporally, and so also upon you if God see it more for your commodity, at the least inwardly you shall feel it by quietness and comfort of conscience. And secondly, after this life you shall find it so plentifully, as the eye hath not seen, the ear hath not heard, the heart cannot conceive how great and glorious God's reward will be upon your bodies, much more upon your souls. God open your eyes to see and feel this in deed. Then shall we think the cross, which is a means hereto, to be commodious. Then shall we

* Undeniable.

thank God that He would chastise us. Then shall we say with David, Happy am I that Thou hast punished me ; for before I went astray, but now I keep Thy laws. This that we may do indeed, my dearly beloved, let us first know that our cross cometh from God. Secondly, that it cometh from God as a father, that is, to our weal and good. Therefore, let us, thirdly, call to mind our sins, and ask pardon. Whereto let us, fourthly, look for help certainly at God's hand in His good time ; help, I say, such as shall make most to God's glory, and to the comfort and commodity of our souls and bodies eternally. This if we certainly conceive, then will there issue out of us hearty thanksgiving, which God requireth as a most precious sacrifice. That we may all through Christ offer this, let us use earnest prayer to our God and dear Father ; who bless us, keep us, and comfort us under His sweet cross for ever. Amen, amen.

My dear hearts, if I could in any way comfort you, you should be sure thereof, though my life lay thereon ; but now I must do as I may, because I cannot as I would. Oh that it would please our dear Father shortly to bring us where we should never depart, but enjoy continually the blessed fruition of His heavenly presence ; pray, pray that it may speedily come to pass ; pray. To-morrow I will send unto you to know your estate ; send me word what are the chiefest things they charge you withal.—From the Counter,

By your brother in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

TO MISTRESS HALL,

Prisoner in Newgate, and ready to make answer
before her adversaries.

OUR most merciful God and Father, through Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour, be merciful unto us, and make perfect the good He hath begun in us unto the end. Amen.

My dear sister, rejoice in the Lord, rejoice ; be glad, I say, be merry and thankful ; not only because Christ so commandeth us, but also because our state wherein we are presently requireth no less ; for we are the Lord's witnesses. God the Father hath vouchsafed to choose us amongst many, to witness and testify that Christ His Son is King, and that His Word is true. Christ our Saviour, for His love's sake towards us, will have us to bear record that He is no usurper nor deceiver of the people, but God's Ambassador, Prophet, and Messiah : so that of all dignities upon earth this is the highest. Greater honour had not His prophets, apostles, nor dearest friends, than to bear witness with Christ, as we now do. The world, following the counsel of their sire Satan, would gladly condemn Christ and His verity : but lo, the Lord hath chosen us to be His champions, to let* this. As stout soldiers, therefore, let us stand to our Master, who is with us, and standeth on our right hand, that we shall not be much moved if we hope and hang on

* Hinder.

His mercy ; He is so faithful and true, that He will never tempt us further than He will make us able to bear. Therefore be not careful (for I hear say this day you shall be called forth) what you shall answer. The Lord, which is true and cannot lie, hath promised and will never fail nor forget it, that you shall have both and what how to answer, so as shall make His shameless adversaries ashamed. Hang therefore on this promise of God, who is an helper at a pinch, and a most present remedy to them that hope in Him. Never was it heard of, or shall be, that any hoping in the Lord was put to foil.

Therefore as I said, I say again, dear sister ; be not only not careful for your answering, but also be joyful for your cause. Confess Christ and be not ashamed, and He will confess you and never be ashamed of you. Though loss of goods and life be like here to ensue ; yet if Christ be true (as He is most true), it is otherwise in deed ; for he that loseth his life, saith He, winneth it, but he that saveth it, loses it. Our sins have deserved many deaths. Now if God deal so with us, that He will make our deserved death a demonstration of His grace, a testimonial of His verity, a confirmation of His people, and an overthrow of His adversaries, what great cause have we to be thankful ! Be thankful, therefore, good sister, be thankful, rejoice, and be merry in the Lord, be stout in His cause and quarrel, be not faint-hearted, but run out your race, and set your captain Christ before your eyes. Behold how great your reward is : see the great

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When you shall come before the magistrates to give an answer of the hope which is in you, do it with all reverence and simplicity. And because you may be something afraid* by the power of the magistrates, and cruelty which they will threaten against you, I would you set before you the good father Moses, to follow his example: for he set the invisible God before his eyes of faith, and with them looked upon God and His glorious majesty and power, as with his corporal eyes he saw Pharaoh and all his fearful terrors. So do you, my dearly beloved; let your inward eyes give such light unto you, that, as you know you are before the magistrates, so, and much more, you and they also are present before the face of God; which will give such wisdom to you, fearing Him, and seeking His praise, as the enemies shall wonder at: and further, He will so order their hearts and doings, that they shall, will they nill they, serve God's providence towards you (which you cannot avoid though you would), as shall be most to His glory and your everlasting comfort. Therefore, my good brother, let your whole study be only to please God; put Him always before your eyes, for He is on your right hand lest you should be moved; He is faithful, and never will suffer you to be tempted above that He will make you able to bear. Yea, every hair of your head He hath numbered, so that one of them shall not perish without His good will; which cannot be but good unto you, in that He is become your

* Terrified.

Father through Christ ; and therefore, as He hath given you to believe in Him (God increase this belief in us all !) so doth He now graciously give unto you to suffer for His name's sake ; the which you ought with all thankfulness to receive, in that you are made worthy to drink of the self-same cup which not only the very sons of God have drank of before you, but even the very natural Son of God Himself hath brought you good luck.* Oh, He of His mercy make us thankful to pledge Him again. Amen.

Because the chiefest matter they will trouble you and go about to deceive you withal is the sacrament, not of Christ's Body and Blood but *of the altar*, as they call it, thereby destroying the sacrament which Christ instituted, I would you noted these two things : First, that the sacrament of the altar, which the priest offereth in the mass, and eateth privately with himself, is not the sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood instituted by Him ; as Christ's institution, plainly written and set forth in the Scriptures, being compared to their using of it, plainly doth declare.

Again, if they talk with you of Christ's sacrament instituted by Him, whether it be Christ's body or no, answer them, that as to the eyes of your reason, to your taste and corporal senses it is bread and wine, and therefore the Scripture calleth it after the consecration so : even so to the eyes, taste, and senses of your faith, which ascendeth to the right hand of God in heaven where

* Hath pledged you to.

Christ sitteth, it is in very deed Christ's body and blood, which spiritually your soul feedeth on to everlasting life, in faith and by faith, even as your body presently feedeth on the sacramental bread and sacramental wine.

By this means, as you shall not allow transubstantiation, nor none of their popish opinions, so shall you declare the sacrament to be a matter of faith, and not of reason, as the papists make it. For they deny God's omnipotency, in that they say, Christ is not there if bread be there; but faith looketh on the omnipotency of God joined with His promise, and doubteth not but that Christ is able to give that He promiseth us spiritually by faith, the bread still remaining in substance, as well as if the substance of bread were taken away; for Christ saith not in any place, This is no bread. But of this gear* God shall instruct you, if you hang on His promise, and pray for the power and wisdom of His Spirit: which undoubtedly as you are bound to look for, praying for it, so He hath bound Himself by His promise to give it; the which thing He grant unto us both, and to all His people, for His name's sake, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

JOHN BRADFORD.

TO A FAITHFUL FRIEND OF HIS,

Whom, for his godly simplicity and singleness of heart in the ways of the Lord, he called Nathanael; as he doth also here in this letter.

THE merciful God and Father of our Saviour Jesus Christ,

* Matter.

which loveth us as a most dear Father, and hath put upon Him towards us the affection of a most tender mother towards her children, so that He can no less think upon us (although of ourselves we be most unworthy, and deserve nothing less) than she can think on her only-begotten child in his distress; yea, if she should forget her child, as some unnatural mother will do, yet will He never forget us, although for a time He seem to sleep, that we might be occasioned to call loud and awake Him: this good God keep you, my dear brother Nathanael, and your good yoke-fellow, my heartily beloved sister in the Lord, in all things now and for ever, to His glory and your eternal comfort. And also, of His goodness, He grant you both the feeling of that hope, which undoubtedly He hath laid up in store for you both far passing the store and provision, not only which you had made, but all the world is able to make; as I trust already He hath wrought it in you, but I beseech Him to increase it more and more, and kindle in you a hearty longing for the enjoying of the same: the which once felt and had indeed, then the means by the which we come thereto cannot be so greatly dreaded, as most men do dread them, because either they want this feeling (I mean of it altogether), or else because the sense of this present time and things therein are as a mist, to the hiding of those things from our sight, lest we should run and embrace them by hearty prayer: the spirit whereof God grant us—and indeed we should attain enough in this behalf, if we continued therein.

For auricular confession, wherein you desire my advice for your good yoke-fellow and family (my most dear brother), I am as ready to give it as you desire it; yea more glad, forasmuch as half a suspicion was in me (at the least, touching my dear sister your wife) of a lothing of my advice, that too much had been given; where* indeed I should lament my too little feeding you spiritually, as both you out of prison and in prison have fed me corporally. But as I always thought of her, so I yet think, that she is the child of God, whom God dearly loveth, and will in His good time, to her eternal comfort, give her her heart's desire, in sure feeling and sensible believing of this, which I would she had often in her mind, namely that He is her God and Father, through Christ Jesus our dear Lord and Saviour. A greater service to God she cannot give than to believe this. If Satan say she believeth not, to answer, not him but the Lord, and to say, Yea Lord, help my unbelief, and increase my poor faith, which Satan saith is no faith: make him a liar, Lord, as always he hath been, is, and shall be. Undoubtedly, sooner or later, God will graciously hear her groans, and keep all her tears in His bottle, yea, write them in His counting-book: for He is a righteous God, and hath no pleasure in the death of His creature: He loveth mercy, He will return and show her His mercy: He will cast all her sins and iniquities into the bottom of the sea: and the longer that He

* Whereas.

tarrieth (as He doth it but to prove her), so the more liberally will He recompense her long looking ; which no less pleaseth Him than it grieveth now her outward Adam. For the mortification whereof, God useth this cross ; and therefore, if she desire to bear the same, doubtless God will make her able to bear it : and in presumption of His goodness and strength, let her cast herself wholly upon Him : for He is faithful, and will assuredly confirm and bring to a happy end that good which graciously He hath begun in her. The which thing I desire Him to do, for His own glory and name's sake. Amen, amen.

And now to the matter. Confession auricular, as it was first used and instituted (which was by the way of a counsel asking) I take to be among those traditions which are indifferent ; that is, neither unlawful, nor necessarily binding us, except the offence of the weak could not be avoided. But to consider it as it is now used, I write to you but as I think and what my mind is ; the which follow no further, than good men by God's Word do allow it ; to consider it, I say, as it is now used, methinks it is plainly unlawful and wicked, and that for these causes :—First, because they make it a service of God, and a thing which pleaseth God of itself, I will not say meritorious. This bringer, my brother, can tell you at large how great an evil this is. Secondly, because they make it of necessity, so that he or she that useth it not is not taken for a good Christian. Thirdly, because it requireth of itself an impossibility, that is, the numbering

and telling of all our sins ; which no man perceiveth, much less can utter. Fourthly, because it establisheth and confirmeth, at the least alloweth, praying to saints : *Precor sanctam Mariam* you must say, or the priest for you. Fifthly, because it is very injurious to the liberty of the Gospel ; the which to affirm, in example and fact, I take to be a good work and a dear in God's sight. Sixthly, because (as it is used) it is a note, yet a very sinew, of the popish Church ; and therefore we should be so far from allowing the same, that we should think ourselves happy to lose any thing in bearing witness thereagainst. Seventhly, because, instead of counsel, thereat you should receive poison ; or if you refuse it under Sir John's *benedicite*, you should no less there be wound in the briars. Eighthly, because the end and purpose why we go thither, is for the avoiding of the cross ; that is, for our own cause, and not for Christ's cause, or for our brethren's commodity.* For in that they make it so necessary a thing and a worshipping of God, it cannot but be against Christ and the freedom of His Gospel : and the same thing teacheth us that it is against the commodity* of our brethren, which either be weak, either be strong, either be ignorant, either be obstinate. If they be weak, by your resorting to it they be made more weak. If they be strong, you do what you can to infirm their strength. If they be ignorant, therein you help to keep them by your fact. If they be

* Advantage.

obstinate, your resorting to it cannot but rock them asleep in their obstinate error of the necessity of this rite and ceremony. These causes recited do show you what I think in this: but my thinking must no further bind you than a man's thought should do, except the same be grounded upon God's Word, which bindeth indeed; as I think they do. I doubt not but you, weighing these causes, and especially two (of the first and the last), if you pray to God for His Spirit to direct you, and thereto ask the advice of this my good brother and other godly learned men, I doubt not (I say) but you should be guided to do that which is best in God's sight, although in the sight of the world perhaps you should be counted foolish and precise. But be at a point with yourselves, as the disciples of Christ; which had forsaken themselves, to follow, not your will but God's will, as you daily pray in the Lord's Prayer. The cross of Christ be willing to carry, lest you carry the cross of the world, the flesh, or the devil. One of these four crosses you must carry. Three of them bringeth to hell; and therefore the more part goeth that way, which is a broad way. Only the fourth bringeth to heaven, but few go that way, as well because the way is strait, as also because few walk in it. Howbeit, though it be strait it is but short: and the few are many; if you consider the godly as the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors, and Christ Jesus, with all His guard and train. Think not scorn to come after them which are gone before you, and after them which now go before you: in whose number, I trust, I

am appointed to be one ; and I beseech you pray for me, that God would vouch me worthy that honour. Our sins deserve plagues, prison, and the loss of all that ever we have : therefore if God remove our sins out of sight, and send us prison, or loss of goods and living, for His name's sake, oh how happy are we ! My dear hearts in the Lord, consider this gear,* and be assured that he which loseth any thing for Christ's sake, the same in his posterity shall find it here, and in heaven elsewhere. As for unableness to answer for your faith, it shall be enough to will † them to dispute with your teachers. Faith standeth not in disputing. I think few, if it came to disputing, could defend the Godhead of Christ, and many other articles: I speak it for the simple sort. Pray for me. Lack of paper maketh this end. Commend me to my good brother Richard Bleacher, and my good sister his wife: I pray them to pray for me. I trust by this bearer to hear how you do.

JOHN BRADFORD.

A LETTER WRITTEN TO HIS MOTHER,

As a Farewell, when he thought he should have suffered shortly after.

THE Lord of life and Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ, bless you and comfort you, my good and dear mother, with His heavenly comfort, consolation, grace, and Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.

* Thing.

† Desire.

If I thought that daily, yea, almost hourly, you did not cry upon God the Father through Jesus Christ, that He would give me His blessing, even the blessing of His children, then would I write more hereabouts. But forasmuch as herein I am certain you are diligent (and so I beseech you, good mother to continue), I think it good to write something whereby this your crying might be furthered. Furthered it will be, if those things which hinder it be taken away. Among the which in that I think my imprisonment is the greatest and chiefest, I will thereabouts spend this letter; and that briefly, lest it might increase the let,* as my good brother this bringer can tell you. You shall know therefore, good mother, that for my body, though it be in an house out of the which I cannot come when I will, yet in that I have conformed my will to God's will, I find herein liberty enough, I thank God. And for my lodging, bedding, meat, drink, godly and learned company, books, and all other necessities for mine ease, comfort, and commodity, I am in much better case than I could wish, and God's merciful providence here is far above my worthiness. Worthiness, quoth I? Alas, I am worthy of nothing but damnation. But, besides all this, for my soul I find much more commodity.† For God is my Father, I now perceive, through Christ: therefore in prisoning me for His Gospel, He maketh me like to the image

* Hindrance.

† Profit.

of His Son Jesus Christ here, that, when He cometh to judgment, I might then be like unto Him, as my trust and hope is I shall be. Now maketh He me like to His friends the prophets, apostles, the holy martyrs and confessors. Which of them did not suffer, at the least, imprisonment or banishment for His Gospel and Word? Now, mother, how far am I unmeet to be compared to them—I (I say) which always have been and am so vile an hypocrite and grievous a sinner! God might have caused me long before this time to have been cast into prison as a thief, a blasphemer, an unclean liver, and an heinous offender of the laws of the realm: but, dear mother, His mercy is so great upon both you and me and all that love me, that I should be cast into prison, as none of these, or for any such vices, but only for His Christ's sake, for His Gospel's sake, for His Church's sake; that hereby, as I might learn to lament and bewail my ingratitude and sins, so I might rejoice in His mercy, be thankful, look for eternal joy with Christ, for whose sake (praised be His name for it!) I now suffer, and therefore should be merry and glad. And indeed, good mother, so I am, as ever I was: yea, never so merry and glad was I, as I now should be, if I could get you to be merry with me, to thank God for me, and to pray on this sort: "Ah, good Father, which dost vouchsafe that my son, being a grievous sinner in Thy sight, should find this favour with Thee, to be one of Thy Son's captains and men of war, to fight and suffer for His

Gospel's sake, I thank Thee, and pray Thee in Christ's name, that Thou wouldest forgive him his sins and unthankfulness, and make perfect in him that good which Thou hast begun : yea, Lord, I pray Thee, make him worthy to suffer not only imprisonment, but even very death, for Thy truth, religion, and Gospel's sake. As Hannah did apply and give her first child Samuel unto Thee ; so do I, dear Father, beseeching Thee for Christ's sake to accept this my gift : and give my son, John Bradford, grace always truly to serve Thee and Thy people, as Samuel did. Amen, amen.

If on this sort, mother, from your heart you would pray, as I should be the most merriest man that ever was, so am I certain the lets* of your prayer for † my imprisonment would be taken away. Good mother, therefore mark what I have written, and learn this prayer by heart, to say it daily ; and then I shall be merry, and you shall rejoice—if that you continue, as I trust you do, in God's true religion ; even the same I have taught you, and, my Father Traves, I trust, will put you in remembrance of : my brother Roger also, I trust, doth so daily. Go to, therefore, and learn apace. Although the devil casts divers lets ‡ in the way, God, in whom you trust, will cast them away, for His Christ's sake, if you will call upon Him ; and never will He suffer you to be tempted above that He will make you able to bear. But how you should do

* Hindrances.

† On account of.

‡ Hindrances.

herein, the other letter I have written herewith shall teach you ; which I would none should read, till my Father Traves have read it, and he will give you, by God's grace, some instructions. Now, therefore, will I make an end, praying you, good mother, to look for no more letters : for if it were known that I have pen and ink and did write, then should I want all the aforesaid commodities I have spoken of concerning my body, and be cast into some dungeon in fetters of iron ; which thing I know would grieve you ; and therefore, for God's sake, see that these be burned, when this little prayer in it is copied out by my brother Roger— for perchance your house may be searched for such gear* when you think little of it. And look for no more, sweet mother, till either God shall deliver me and send me out, either † you and I shall meet together in heaven, where we shall never part asunder. Amen.

I require you, Elizabeth and Margaret, my sisters, that you will fear God, use prayer, love your husbands, be obedient unto them (as God willeth you), bring up your children in God's fear, and be good housewives. God bless you both, with both your husbands, my good brethren ; whom to do good because I now cannot, I will pray for them and you. Commend me to my sister Anne, Mother Pike, T. Sorrocold and his wife, R. Shalcross and his wife, R. Bolton, J. Wilde, M. Vicar, the parson of Mottram, Sir Lawrence Hall, with

* Things.

† Or.

all that love and (I trust) live the Gospel : and God turn Sir Thomas his heart. Amen. I will daily pray for him. I need not to set my name ; you know it well enough.

Because you should give my letters to Father Traves to be burned, I have written here a prayer for you to learn, to pray for me, good mother, and another for all your house in your evening prayer, to pray with my brother. These prayers are written with mine own hand : keep them still, but the letters give to Father Traves to burn, and give Father Traves a copy of the latter prayer.

ANOTHER LETTER TO HIS MOTHER,

As his last farewell unto her in this world, a little before he was burned.

God's mercy and peace in Christ be more and more perceived of us. Amen.

My most dear mother in the bowels of Christ, I heartily pray and beseech you to be thankful for me unto God, which thus now taketh me unto Himself. I die not, my good mother, as a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, etc. ; but I die as a witness of Christ His Gospel and verity, which hitherto I have confessed (I thank God) as well by preaching as by prisonment, and now even presently I shall most willingly confirm the same by fire. I knowlege* that God most justly

* Own.

might take me hence simply for my sins (which are many, great, and grievous ; but the Lord for His mercy in Christ hath pardoned them all, I hope) ; but now, dear mother, He taketh me hence by this death, as a confessor and witness that the religion taught by Christ Jesu, the prophets, and the apostles is God's truth. The prelates do persecute in me Christ whom they hate, and His truth which they may not abide, because their works are evil, and may not abide the truth and light, lest men should see their darkness. Therefore, my good and most dear mother, give thanks for me to God, that He hath made the fruit of your womb to be a witness of His glory ; and attend to the truth which (I thank God for it) I have truly taught out of the pulpit at Manchester. Use often and continual prayer to God the Father through Christ. Hearken, as you may, to the Scriptures, serve God after His Word, and not after custom : beware of the Romish religion in England, defile not yourself with it : carry Christ's cross, as He shall lay it upon your back ; forgive them that kill me, pray for them, for they know not what they do, commit my cause to God our Father : be mindful of both your daughters to help them as you can. I send all my writings to you by my brother Roger ; do with them as you will, because I cannot as I would ; he can tell you more of my mind. I have nothing to give you, or to leave behind me for you : only I pray God my Father, for His Christ's sake, to bless you and keep you from evil. He give you patience, He make you thankful, as for me so for your-

self, that will take the fruit of your womb to witness His verity ; wherein I confess to the whole world, I die, and depart this life in hope of a much better ; which I look for at the hands of God my Father, through the merits of his dear Son Jesus Christ. Thus, my dear mother, I take my last farewell of you in this life, beseeching the Almighty and Eternal Father by Christ, to grant us to meet in the life to come ; where we shall give Him continual thanks and praise, for ever and ever. Amen.

Out of prison, the 24th of June, 1555.

Your son in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

LETTER TO MISTRESS A. W.

ALMIGHTY God, our Heavenly Father, for His Christ's sake, increase in us faith, by which we may more and more see what glory and honour is reposed and safely kept in heaven, for all them that believe with the heart, and confess Christ and His truth with the mouth. Amen.

My dearly beloved, I remember that once heretofore I wrote unto you a *Vale* or a farewell upon conjecture ; but now I write my farewell to you in this life indeed, upon certain knowledge. My staff standeth at the door. I continually look for the sheriff to come for me, and I thank God I am ready for him. Now go I to practise that which I have preached. Now am I climbing up the hill ; it will cause me to puff and blow before I come to

the cliff. The hill is steep and high : my breath is short and my strength is feeble : pray therefore to the Lord for me, that as I have now, through His goodness, even almost come to the top, I may by His grace be strengthened, not to rest till I come where I should be, Oh loving Lord, put out Thy hand and draw me unto Thee : for no man cometh but he whom the Father draweth. See, my dearly beloved, God's loving mercy : He knoweth my short breath and great weakness. As He sent for Elias a fiery chariot, so sendeth He for me ; for by fire my dross must be purified, that I may be fine gold in His sight. Oh unthankful wretch that I am : Lord, do Thou forgive me mine unthankfulness. Indeed I confess, right dear to me in the Lord, that my sins have deserved hell-fire, much more then this fire. But lo, so loving is my Lord, that He converteth the remedy for my sins, the punishment for my transgressions, into a testimonial of His truth, and a testification of His verity ; which the prelates do persecute in me, and not my sins ; therefore they persecute not me, but Christ in me, which I doubt not will take my part unto the very end. Amen.

Oh that I had so open an heart, as could so receive, as I should do, this great benefit and unspeakable dignity, which God my Father offereth to me. Now pray for me, my dearly beloved, pray for me that I never shrink. I shall never shrink, I hope ; I trust in the Lord I shall never shrink, for He that always hath taken my part, I am assured, will not leave me when I have most need

for His truth and mercy's sake. Oh, Lord, help me : into Thy hands I commend me wholly. In the Lord is my trust ; I care not what man can do unto me. Amen. My dearly beloved, say you *Amen* also, and come after, if God so call you. Be not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, but keep company with Him still. He will never leave you, but in the midst of temptation will give you an outscape, to make you able to bear the brunt. Use hearty prayer : reverently read and hear God's Word ; put it in practice, look for the cross, lift up your heads for your redemption draweth nigh ; know that the death of God's saints is precious in His sight : be merry in the Lord ; pray for the mitigation of God's heavy displeasure upon our country. God keep us for ever : God bless us with His spiritual blessings in Christ. And thus I bid you farewell for ever, in this present life. Pray for me, pray for me, for God's sake, pray for me. God make perfect His good work begun in me. Amen. Out of prison, this 7th of February.

Yours in the Lord,

JOHN BRADFORD.

Thomas Whittell.

THOMAS WHITTELL, or Whittle, was a married priest who, on his expulsion from his parish in Essex, went abroad, and there preached the Reformed Faith wherever he could find an opportunity. He was at last apprehended by one Edmund Alabaster, who, hoping to gain a reward thereby, took him to Gardiner. The Bishop was in his last illness, however, and refused to see the man, who was next taken, on Jan. 10th, 1556, before Bonner, who asked him to attend mass that morning. On Whittell's refusal, Bonner struck him with his fist. The culprit was then handed over to a Dr. Harpsfield, who at length persuaded him to subscribe to certain articles which he had drawn up. After having signed the paper, Whittell was so troubled in his conscience that he could not sleep that night, and on the following morning succeeded in getting hold of the paper and striking out his signature. On January 14th, he was again examined by Bonner, and on that occasion remained so true to himself that he was degraded, sentenced to death, handed over to the secular powers, and on January —, 1556, suffered death at the stake.

TO MY LOVING AND FAITHFUL BROTHER, JOHN
CARELESS,

Prisoner in the King's Bench.

THE same faith for the which Abraham was accounted just, and Mary blessed, whereby also all just men live, the Lord God our loving Father increase and establish in you and me, to the obtaining of eternal life in our alone and sweet Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

I cannot worthily and sufficiently praise God, my heartily beloved brother, for the consolation and joy that I received by reason of your loving letters ; repenting me much that I, being so long so near you, did not enterprise to stir up familiarity and communication between us by writing, to our mutual consolation in Christ. For what is there upon earth wherein to rejoice (where all things are transitory and vain, yea, man himself, respecting this life), but, as David saith, the saints that dwell upon the earth, and such as excel in virtue ? But here now I consider, that if the fellowship, love, and joy of faithful men and children of God, being as we now be in double bondage, the body within clay walls, and the soul within these frail earthly bodies, be so great and comfortable, how unspeakable will those joys be, when we shall be delivered from all corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God ; where we shall be present together continually in our glorified bodies, beholding the face of our Father presently (whom now we see but in the glass of faith), with His dear Son Christ our Redeemer and Brother, and the blessed company of angels and all faithful saved souls ! Oh the incomparable good things and heavenly treasures laid up for us in heaven by Christ Jesus. For the obtaining whereof, we ought to set light by all temporal griefs and transitory afflictions so much the more, in that our good God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above our strength ; and that, namely, in the end of our life, when the tree where it falleth lieth

still, as the preacher saith ; when every one causâ suâ dormit et causâ suâ resurget : for else before the end He suffereth His sometimes to fall, but not finally to perish ; as Peter sunk upon the sea, but yet was not drowned, and sinned grievously upon the land, through infirmity denying his Master, but yet found mercy ; for the righteous falleth oftentimes. And Christ's holy apostles are taught to say, Remitte nobis debita nostra ; yea, though the righteous fall, saith David, he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. Oh the bottomless mercy of God toward us miserable sinners. He vouchsafe to plant in my heart true repentance, and faith, to the obtaining of remission of all my sins, in the mercies of God, and merits of Christ His Son ; and thereto I pray you say, Amen. Oh, my heartily beloved, it grieveth me to see the spoil and havoc that Saul maketh with the congregation of Christ ; but what remedy ? This is God's will and ordinance, that His people shall here both be punished in the flesh and tried in their faith, as it is written, Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth them out of all ; for by a strait path and narrow door must we enter. Whither ? Into the joyful kingdom of heaven. Therefore blessed are you, and other that suffer persecution for Christ's sake, for the possession of the same. Pray for me and my fellows, good brother, that we may fight a good fight, that we may keep the faith, and end our course with joyful gladness ; for now the time of our deliverance is at hand. The Lord guide, defend, and

keep us and you, and all His people in our journey, that we may safely, through a short death, pass to that long lasting life.

Farewell, my dear and loving brother and fellow-soldier in Christ ; farewell, I say, in Him ; who receive our souls in peace when they shall depart from these tabernacles, and He grant us a joyful resurrection, and a merry meeting at the last day, and continual dwelling together in His eternal and heavenly kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yours, with my poor prayer ; and other pleasure can I do you none.

THOMAS WHITTELL, *Minister.*

TO MY DEAR BRETHREN, MASTERS FILLES AND
CUTHBERT.

My dear and well-beloved brethren in Christ, Masters Filles and Cuthbert, I wish you all welfare of soul and body. Welfare to the soul is repentance of sin, faithful affiance in Christ Jesus, and a godly life. Welfare to the body is the health of the same, with all necessary things for this bodily life. The soul of man is immortal, and therefore ought to be well kept, lest immortality to joy should turn to immortality of sorrow. As for the body, be it never so well kept and much made of, yet shortly by nature will it perish and decay. But those that are engrafted and incorporated into Christ by true faith, feeling the motion of God's Holy Spirit, as a pledge of

their election and inheritance, exciting and stirring them not only to seek heavenly things, but also to hate vice and embrace virtue, will not only do those things, but also, if need require, will gladly take up their cross and follow their Captain, their King, and their Saviour Jesus Christ; as His poor afflicted Church of England now doth, against that false and antichristian doctrine and religion now used, and especially that blasphemous mass, wherein Christ's Supper and holy ordinance is altogether perverted and abused, contrary to His institution and to Paul's proceedings; so that that which they have in their mass is neither sacrament of Christ nor yet sacrifice for sin, as the priests falsely pretend. It is a sacrament, that is, as St. Augustine saith, a visible sign of invisible grace, when it is ministered to the communicants according to Christ's example, and as it was of late years in this realm. And as for sacrifice, there is none to be made now for sin; for Christ with one sacrifice hath perfected for ever those that are sanctified. Beware of false religion and men's vain traditions, and serve God with reverence and godly fear, according to the doctrine of His Gospel; whereto cleave ye, that ye may be blessed, though of wicked men ye be hated and accursed. Rather drink of the cup of Christ with His Church, than of the cup of that rose-coloured whore of Babylon, which is full of abominations. Rather strive ye to go to heaven by that path which is strait to flesh and blood with the little flock, than to go the wide way, following the

enticements of the world and the flesh, which leadeth to damnation. Like as Christ suffereth in the flesh, saith St. Peter, so arm ye yourselves with the same mind ; for Christ suffered for us, leaving us example to follow His footsteps. Blessed are they that suffer for His sake ; great is their reward in heaven. He that overcometh, saith St. John, shall eat of the tree of life ; he shall have a crown of life, and not be hurt of the second death ; he shall be clothed with white array, and not be put out of the book of life ; yea, I will confess his name, saith Christ, before My Father, and before His angels ; and he shall be a pillar in the house of God, and sit with Me on My seat. And thus I bid you farewell, mine own brethren and dear fellows in Christ, whose grace and peace be always with you. Amen.

This world I do forsake ;
To Christ I me betake ;
And, for His Gospel's sake,
Patiently death I take.

My body to the dust
Now to return it must ;
My soul, I know full well,
With my God it shall dwell.

THOMAS WHITTELL.

A LETTER OF MASTER THOMAS WHITTELL.

Written to a friend of his, declaring the shameful tyranny of bloody Bonner ; who, like a right angel of Satan, to pervert his faith and drive him from God, buffeted him with his butcherly fists, and most cruelly beat him.

UPON Thursday, which was the 6th of January, the Bishop of London sent for me out of the porter's lodge,

where I had been all night lying upon the earth, upon a pallet ; where I had as painful a night of sickness as ever I had, I praise God. And when I came before him, he talked with me many things of the sacrament, so grossly, as is not worthy to be rehearsed. And amongst other things, he asked me if I would have come to mass that morning, if he had sent for me. Whereunto I answered, That I would have come to him at his commandment ; but to your mass (said I) I have small affection. At which answer he was displeased sore, and said I should be fed with bread and water. And as I followed him through the great hall, he turned back and beat me with his fist first on the one cheek, and then on the other, as the sign of my beating did many days after appear. And then he sent me into a little salt-house, where I had no straw nor bed, but lay two nights on a table, and slept soundly, I thank God. Then upon the Friday next after, I was brought to my lord, who gave me many fair words, and said he would be good to me. And so he, going to Fulham, committed me to Dr. Harpsfield, that he and I in that afternoon should commune together ; and drew out certain articles, whereunto if I would subscribe, I should be dismissed. But Dr. Harpsfield sent not for me till night, and then persuaded me very sore to forsake my opinions. I answered, I held nothing but the truth, and therefore I could not so lightly turn therefrom. So I thought I should at that time have had no more ado : but he had made a certain bill, which the Register pulled out of his bosom, and read it. The bill indeed was very

easily made, and therefore more dangerous. For the effect thereof was, to detest all errors and heresies against the sacrament of the altar, and other sacraments, and to believe the faith of the Catholic Church, and live accordingly.

To this bill I did indeed set to my hand, being much desired and counselled so to do ; and, the flesh being always desirous to have liberty, I considered not thoroughly the inconvenience that might come thereupon ; and respite I desired to have had, but earnestly they required me to suscribe. Now when I had so done, I had little joy thereof. For by-and-by my mind and conscience told me by God's Word that I had done evil, by such a sleight, to shake off the sweet cross of Christ ; and it was not my seeking, as God He knoweth, but altogether came of them. Oh, the crafty subtilty of Satan in his members ! Let every man that God shall deliver into their hands take good heed, and cleave fast to Christ ; for they will leave no corner of his conscience unsought, but will attempt all guileful and subtile means to corrupt him, and make him to fall both from God, and His truth. But yet let no man despair of God's help ; for Peter did fall and rise again. And David saith, A righteous man, though he fall, he shall not be cast away ; for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. For I for my part have felt my infirmities, and yet I have found God's present help and comfort in time of need ; I most humbly thank Him therefore. The night after I had subscribed, I was sore grieved, and for sorrow of conscience could not sleep.

For in the deliverance of my body out of bonds, which I might have had, I could find no joy nor comfort ; but still was in my conscience tormented more and more, being assured by God's Spirit and His Word that I through evil counsel and advisement had done amiss ; and both with disquietness of mind, and with my other cruel handling, I was very sickly, lying upon the ground when the keeper came ; whom I desired to pray Dr. Harpsfield to come to me—and so he did. And when he came, and the Register with him, I told him that I was not well at ease : but especially I told him I was grieved very much in my conscience and mind, because I had subscribed ; and I said that my conscience had so accused me, through the just judgment of God and His Word, that I had felt hell in my conscience, and Satan ready to devour me ; and therefore I pray you, Master Harpsfield, said I, let me have the bill again, for I will not stand to it. So he commanded it to be fetched, and gave it me, and suffered me to pull out my name ; whereof I was right glad when I had so done, although death should follow. And hereby I had experience of God's providence and mercy towards me, who trieth His people and suffereth them to fall, but not to be lost. For in the midst of this temptation and trouble, He gave me warning of my fall, and also delivered me ; His name be praised for evermore. Amen. Neither devil nor cruel tyranny can pluck any of Christ's sheep out of His hand. Of the which flock of Christ's sheep, I trust undoubtedly I am one, by means of His death and blood-shedding ;

which shall at the last day stand at His right hand, and receive, with other, His blessed benediction. And now, being condemned to die, my conscience and mind, I praise God, is quiet in Christ; and I by His grace am very well willing and content to give over this body to the death, for the testimony of His truth and pure religion against Antichrist and all his false religion and doctrine. They that report otherwise of me, speak not truly. And as for Fountain, I saw him not all this while.

THOMAS WHITTELL, *Minister.*

Robert Samuel.

ROBERT SAMUEL was vicar of Barfold, in Suffolk, but was removed from his ministry for refusing to obey Queen Mary's decree that all ministers married during the reign of Edward VI. should put away their wives. Samuel declared that "God's laws should not be broken for man's traditions," and continued living with his wife at Ipswich. Spies being set to watch him, he was at last detected at home, the house surrounded in the night, and Samuel taken prisoner, and cast into Ipswich gaol. Soon after he was removed to Norwich, where Dr. Hopton, the Bishop, and his Chancellor, Dr. Dunnings, treated him with great cruelty, placing him in a close prison, chained upright to a post in such a way that he could only just stand on tiptoe; they also fed him on only two or three mouthfuls of bread, and three spoonfuls of water per day, just enough to sustain life and reserve him for further torments. He suffered at the stake on August 31st, 1555. It was reported by some who witnessed his death "that his body did shine as bright and white as new tried silver in the eyes of all that stood by."

AN EXHORTATION

To the patient suffering of afflictions for Christ's cause,
and the verity of His Gospel.

A MAN knoweth not his time; but as the fish is taken with the angle, and as the birds are caught with the snare, even so are men caught and taken in the perilous time, when it cometh upon them. The time cometh, the day draweth near, Ezek. vii. Better it were to die, as the

preacher saith, than to live and see the miserable works which are done under the sun ; such sudden and strange mutations, such woeful, heinous, and lamentable divisions, so fast approacheth, and none or very few thoroughly repenteth. Alas, for this sinful nation, a people of great iniquity and seed of ungraciousness, corrupting their ways. They have forsaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel to anger, and are gone backward. Who now liveth not in such security and rest, as though all dangers were clean overpassed ? Who now blindeth and buffeteth not Christ, with "seest me and seest me not ?" * Yea, who liveth not now in such felicity, worldly pleasures, and joys, wholly seeking the world, providing and craftily shifting for the earthly clod and all carnal appetites, as though sin were clean forgotten, overthrown, and devoured ? Like hoggish Gadarenes now are we more afraid and ashamed of Christ our Messiah, fearing the loss of our filthy pigs, I mean our transitory goods, and disquieting of our sinful and mortal bodies in this short, uncertain, and miserable life, than of a legion of devils seducing and driving us from hearing, reading, and believing Christ, God's eternal Son, and His Holy Word, the power to save our souls, unto vanities, lies, and fables, and to this bewitching world. Oh perilous abundance of goods, too much saturity † of meats, wealth, and quietness, which destroyed with so many souls those goodly cities Sodom and Gomorrah ! Jeroboam, so long

* An allusion to the game of *blind-man's buff*.

† Fulness.

as he was but a poor man, not yet advanced to his dignity, lived in the laws of God without reprehension ; but, brought once to wealth and prosperous estate, he became a wicked and most shameful idolater. And what made the covetous young man so loth to follow Christ, when he was bidden to forsake the worldly wealth which he then enjoyed ? Woe be unto these false elusions* of the world, baits of perdition, hooks of the devil, which have so shamefully deceived and seduced full many from the right path unto the Lord, into the highways of confusion and perpetual perdition.

We might now worthily, dear Christians, lament and bewail our heavy state, miserable condition, and sorrowful chance ; yea, I say, we might well accuse ourselves, and, with Job, curse these our troublous, wicked, and bloody last days of this world, were it not that we both see and believe, and find in God's sacred book, that a remnant God hath in all ages reserved ; I mean the faithful, as many as have been, from the beginning of the world, exercised, whetted, and punished with divers afflictions, troubles, and tossings, cast and dashed against all perils and dangers, as the very dross and outcasts of the earth, and yet will in no wise halt between God and Baal : for God utterly abhorreth two men in one ; He cannot away with them that are between both, but casteth them away as a filthy vomit. Christ will not part spoil with His mortal enemy the devil : He will have all or lose all : He

* Illusions.

will not permit the devil to have the service of the body, and He to stand contented with the heart and mind; but He will be glorified both in your bodies and in your spirits, which are His, as St. Paul saith, 1 Cor. vi. For He hath made all, bought all, and dearly paid for all, as St. Peter saith; with His own immaculate body hath He clean discharged your bodies from sin, death, and hell, and with His most precious blood paid your ransom and full price, once for all, and for ever. Now what harm, I pray you, or what loss sustain you by this? Why are you, O vain men, more afraid of Jesus, your gentle Saviour, and His Gospel of salvation, than of a legion of cruel devils, going about with false delusions utterly to destroy you both bodies and souls? Think you to be more sure than under your captain Christ? Do you promise yourselves to be more quiet in Satan's service than in Christ's religion? Esteem you more these transitory and pernicious pleasures than God and all His heavenly treasures? Oh palpable darkness, horrible madness, and wilful blindness without comparison, too much to be suffered any longer. We see and will not see; we know and will not know; yea, we smart and will not feel? and that our own conscience well knoweth. Oh miserable and brainless souls, which would for foolish pleasures and slippery wealth lose the royal kingdom and permanent joys of God, with the everlasting glory which He hath prepared for them that truly love Him and renounce the world. The children of the world live in pleasure and wealth; and the devil, who is their god and prince of this world,

keepeth their wealth which is proper unto them, and letteth them enjoy it. But let us which be of Christ seek and inquire for heavenly things, which by God's promise and mercy in Christ shall be peculiar unto us. Let, I say, the Cretians, epicures, and such other beastly Belials and carnal people, pass for* things that be pleasant for the body, and do appertain to this transitory life ; yet shall they once, as the kingly prophet saith, run about the city of God to and fro howling like dogs, desiring one scrap of the joys of God's elect, but all too late, as the rich glutton. Let us therefore pass for* those things that do pertain to the Spirit, and be celestial. We must be here, saith Paul, not as inhabitants and home-dwellers, but as strangers ; not as strangers only, but, after the mind of Job, as faithful soldiers appointed of our governor to fight against the governor of darkness of this world, against spiritual craftiness in heavenly things. The time is come, we must to it ; the judgment must begin first at the house of God. Began they not first with the green and sappy tree ? and what followed them on the dry branches ? Jeremy, speaking in the person of God, saith, In the city wherein My name is invocate, will I begin to punish : but as for you, meaning the wicked, you shall be as innocents and not once touched ; for the dregs of God's wrath, the bottom of all sorrows, are reserved unto them in the end, but God's household shall drink the flower of the cup of His

* Value.

mercy. And therefore let us say with Hezekias, Play the men and shrink not ; let us comfort ourselves, for the Lord is with us our helper, and fighteth for us. The Lord is, saith he, with you when you be with Him, and when you seek Him He will be found of you ; and again, when you forsake him he will forsake you.

Wherefore we ought not to be dismayed or discourage ourselves, but rather to be of good comfort ; not to be sad but merry ; not sorrowful but joyful ; in that God of His goodness will vouchsafe to take us as His beloved children, to subdue our sinful lusts, our wretched flesh and blood, unto His glory, the promoting of His Holy Word, and edifying of His Church. What if the earthly house of this our habitation (Paul meaning the body) be destroyed ? We know assuredly we shall have a building of God, not made with hands, but everlasting in heaven, with such joys as faith taketh not, hope toucheth not, nor charity apprehendeth not. They pass all desires and wishes. Gotten they may be by Christ, esteemed they cannot be. Wherefore the more affliction and persecution the Word of God bringeth, the more felicity and greater joy abideth in heaven. But the worldly peace, idle ease, wealthy pleasure, and this present and pleasant transitory life and felicity, which the ungodly foolishly imagine to procure unto themselves by persecuting and thrusting away the Gospel, shall turn unto their own trouble, and at last unto horrible destruction and mutations of realms and countries ; and after this life, if they repent not, into their perpetual infelicity, perdition, and damnation. For they had rather

with Nabal and his temporal pleasures descend to the devil, than with poor Christ and His bodily troubles ascend into the kingdom of God His Father. But an unwise man, saith the Psalmist, comprehendeth them not, neither doth the foolish understand them—that is, these bloody persecutors, grown up and flourishing like the flower and grass in the field. But unto this end do they so flourish, that they might be cut down and cast into the fire for ever. For, as Job saith, then joy lasteth but the twinkling of an eye; and death shall lie gnawing upon them, as doth the flock upon the pasture; yea, the cruel worm, late repentance, as St. Mark saith, shall lie gnawing, tormenting, and accusing their wretched conscience for evermore.

Let us therefore, good Christians, be constant in obeying God rather than men. For although they slay our sinful bodies, (yea, rather our deadly enemies,) for God's verity yet can they not do it but by God's sufferance and good will, to His praise and honour, and to our eternal joy and felicity. For our blood, shed for the Gospel, shall preach it with more fruit and greater furtherance, than did our mouths, lives, and writings; as did the blood of Abel, Stephen, with many other more. What though they laugh Christ and His Word to scorn, which sit in the chair of perverse pestilent scorners? to whom, as to the wise Gentiles of the world, the Gospel of Christ is but foolishness, as it was to the Jews a slander and a stumbling stone, whereat they now being fallen, have provoked the wrath and vengeance of God upon them. These are the days of vengeance, saith Luke, that all things

written may be fulfilled. And surely it shall be no less than a huge storm of evils that shall come upon us : because that a long and a cursed obstinate maliciousness of us hath gone before crying in the ears of the Lord God of hosts, who so many times and so many ways have been provoked* with the unspeakable riches of His goodness, His patience, and long-suffering, to amendment, and have nevertheless contemned the same, and proceeded forward to worse and worse, provoking and stirring the presence of God's majesty unto anger. Now therefore, saith God by the mouth of His prophet, I will come upon thee, and I will send My wrath upon thee (upon thee, I say, O England); and punish thee according to thy ways, and reward thee after all thine abominations. Thou hast kindled the fire of God's wrath, and hast stirred up the coals. For thou was once lightened; and hadst tasted of the heavenly gift, and wast become partaker of the Holy Ghost, and hadst tasted of the good Word of God. Yea, it is yet in thy mouth, saith the prophet. Alas, O England, that knewest thy Lord and Master's will, but didst nothing thereafter; thou must therefore (saith he) suffer many stripes and many sharper strokes, and walk on in the glittering and hot flame of thine own fire, and in the coals that thou hast kindled. This cometh to thee from My hand, saith the Lord; namely that thou shalt sleep in sorrow, yea, even so thou shalt. The plain truth telleth the tale; the immutable justice of the everliving God,

* Invited.

and the ordinary course of His plagues from the beginning, confirmeth the same. The joy of our heart (saith Jeremiah) is gone, our glory is fallen away, our merry singing is turned into mourning, the garland of our head is fallen. Alas and weal* away that ever we sinned so sore! Woe worth all abominations, and wickedness! † Woe worth cloked hypocrisy! Woe worth our carnal liberty! Woe worth our most cursed idolatry. For because of these things, saith the Lord, ye shall perish with sword, hunger, and pestilence.

Wherefore, let all the wicked enemies of Christ, and all the unbelievers, be afraid to be tormented and vexed with all hellish furies; and clean without hope, at God's accounting day; which know not God in Christ to be their very righteousness, their life, their only salvation and alone Saviour, nor believe not in Him. They must, saith St. John, needs abide and perish with their sins, in death and in eternal damnation. But we be the children of saints, as the elder Toby did answer; and look for another life, which God shall give to all them which change not their faith, nor shrink not from Him. Rejoice therefore, ye Christian afflicted brethren, for they cannot take our souls and bodies out of the hands of the Almighty, which be kept as in the bosom of our most sweet and loving father: and if we abide fast in Christ, and turn not away like weathercocks, surely we shall live for ever; Christ affirming the same, saying, My

* Well-a-day.

† Saxon, for woe is unto.

sheep hear My voice, I know them, they hearken unto Me and to no strangers, and I give them everlasting life, for they shall not be lost, nor no man shall pluck them out of My hands; no, nor yet this flattering world with all its vain pleasures, nor any tyrant with his great threats and stout brags can once move them out of the way of eternal life. What consolation and comfort may we have more pleasant and effectuous than this? God is on our side, and fighteth for us: He suffereth, He smarteth, and is afflicted with us. As the world can do nothing against His might, neither in taking away or diminishing of His glory, nor putting Him from His celestial throne: so can it not harm nor hurt any one of His children without His good will; for we are members of His body, out of His flesh and of His bones, and as dear to Him as the apple of His eye. Let us therefore, with an earnest faith, set fast hold and sure feeling upon the promises of God in the Gospel; and let us not be sundered from the same by any temptation, tribulation, or persecution. Let us consider the verity of God to be invincible, inviolable, and immutable, promising and giving us, His faithful soldiers, life eternal. It is He only that hath deserved it for us: it is His only benefit, and of His only mere mercy: unto Him only must we render thanks. Let not therefore the vain phantasies and dreams of men, the foolish gauds* and toys of the world, nor the crafty delusions of the devil, drive and separate us from our

* Baubles.

hope of the crown of righteousness, that is laid up in store for us against the last day. Oh that happy and merry last day—I mean to the faithful—when Christ by His covenant shall grant and give unto them that overcome, and keep His words to the end, that they may ascend and sit in seat with Him, as He hath ascended and sitteth on the throne with His Father. The same body and soul that is now with Christ afflicted, shall then be with Christ glorified; now in the butchers' hands as sheep appointed to die, then sitting at God's table with Christ in His kingdom, as God's honourable and dear children: where we shall have, for earthly poverty, heavenly riches; for hunger and thirst, saturity* of the pleasant presence of the glory of God; for sorrows, troubles, and cold irons, celestial joys, and the company of angels; and for a bodily death, life eternal. Oh happy souls, oh precious death and evermore blessed; right dear in the eyes of God, to you the spring of the Lord shall ever be flourishing. Then, as saith Isaiah, the redeemed shall return and come again into Zion, praising the Lord, and eternal mercies shall be over their heads; they shall obtain mirth and solace; sorrow and woe shall be utterly vanquished; yea, I am even He, saith the Lord, that in all things giveth you everlasting consolation. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be glory and praise for ever, Amen.

ROBERT SAMUEL.

* Fulness.

John Hullver.

JOHN HULLVER, Minister, educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge, was persecuted by Dr. Thirleby, Bishop of Ely, and his Chancellor for upholding the Reformation, and was burnt on April 2nd, 1555, at Cambridge.

JOHN HULLVER, BEING OF LONG TIME PRISONER,

And now openly judged to die for the testimony of the Lord Jesus, wisheth heartily to the whole congregation of God the strength of his Holy Spirit, to their everlasting health, both of body and soul.

I now, most dear Christians, having the sweet comfort of God's saving health, and being confirmed with His free Spirit (be He only praised therefore), am constrained in my conscience, thinking it my very duty, to admonish you, as ye tender the salvation of your souls, by all manner of means to separate yourselves from the company of the Pope's hirelings; considering what is said in the Revelation of St. John, by the angel of God, touching all men. The words be these: If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured into the cup of His wrath; and He shall be punished with fire and brimstone

before the holy angels and before the Lamb, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up evermore. Mark well here, good Christians, who is this beast and worshippers, that shall be partakers of that unspeakable torment. This beast is none other but the carnal and fleshly kingdom of Antichrist, the Pope with his rabble of false prophets and ministers, as it is most manifest ; which, to maintain their high titles, worldly promotions and dignities, do with much cruelty daily more and more set forth and establish their own traditions, decrees, and decretals, contrary to God's holy ordinances, statutes, laws, and commandments, and wholly repugnant to His sincere and pure religion and true worshipping. Now, what do they else but worship this beast and his image, which after they had once already escaped from the filthiness of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, are yet again tangled therein, and overcome, using dissimulation unfaithfully, for fear of their displeasure, doing one thing outwardly, and thinking inwardly another ? so having them in reverence under a cloke and colour, to whom they ought not so much as to say God speed ; and adjoining themselves to the malignant congregation, which they ought to abhor as a den of thieves and murderers, and as the brothel-house of most blasphemous fornicators ; whose voices, being contrary to Christ's voice, if they were of His flock, they would not know, but would fly from them—as He Himself, being the good Shepherd of our souls, doth full well in His holy Gospel testify. Again, what do they else I pray you, but receive the

beast's mark in their foreheads and in their hands, which do bear a fair face and countenance outwardly in supporting them as other do, being ashamed openly to confess Christ and His holy Gospel? But this feignedness and dissimulation, Christ and His Gospel will in no wise allow: of whom it is said, Whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and My words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when He shall come in the glory of His Father with His holy angels. Therefore, saith Almighty God by His prophet Malachi, Cursed be the dissemblers. Ye were once lightened, and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were become partakers of the Holy Ghost, and tasted of the Word of God, and of the power of the world to come. And our Saviour Christ saith, No man that putteth his hand to the plough and looketh back, is apt for the kingdom of God. Therefore St. John the apostle useth this for a manifest token, that the backsliding from the true teachers of God's Word declareth evidently that they be not of the number of them. For saith he, They went out from us, but they were not of us: for if they had been of us, no doubt they would have continued with us. Surely, so long as we use dissimulation, and to play on both hands, we are not in the light. For whatsoever is manifest, the same is light, as the elect vessel of God, St. Paul, witnesseth.

Wherefore, good Christians, for God's most dear love, deceive not yourselves through your own wisdom, and through the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness

before God ; but certify and stay your own conscience with the sure truth and faithful Word of God, and with the infallible testimonies of Holy Scripture. For although God's mercy is over all His works, yet it doth not extend but only to them that hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of hope unto the end, not being weary in well-doing, but rather wax every day stronger and stronger in the inward man. Therefore in the Revelation of St. John, where it is entreated of the beast and his image, it is also said, Here is the sufferance of saints, and here are they that keep the commandments, and the faith of Jesus Christ. Whereby Almighty God doth show plainly, that He doth use those wicked men as instruments for a time, to try the patience and faith of His peculiar people ; without the performance whereof we can have no part among the living, but, as it is said in the same Revelation, The fearful shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

But peradventure ye will object and say unto me, What shall we do ? Shall we cast ourselves headlong to death ? I say not so. But this I say, That we are all bound (if ever we look to receive salvation at God's hand) in this case wholly to be obedient to His determinate counsel and foreknowledge, expressed by the gift of the Spirit in Holy Scripture ; and then to cast all our care upon Him, who worketh all in all for the best, unto them that love Him. And thus He giveth commandment, saying, Come away from her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. Now

who, hearing this terrible voice of God, which must needs be fulfilled, will not with all speed and diligence apply himself to do thereafter, except such as will presumptuously tempt Him? And as touching such, the wise man saith, He that loveth peril and danger shall perish therein : but they that be of the faith of Abraham, even as he did, so will they in all assays and trials be obedient to the heavenly voice, howsoever it seemeth contrary to their own natural will and carnal reason ; according to the sure word of faith, which saith, Hope thou in the Lord and keep His way ; hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently upon Him. Let not thy jealousy move thee also to do evil. Come out from among them, and join not yourselves to their unlawful assemblies : yea, do not once show yourselves with the least part of your body to favour their wicked doings ; but glorify God (as most right is) so well in your whole body outwardly, as inwardly in your spirit, or else you can do neither of both well ; for your body doth belong to God, so well as your spirit. At the dreadful day of judgment, we shall all receive the works of our bodies, according to that we have done, whether it be good or bad. Therefore whatsoever we do, we may not bring the spirit in bondage to the body, but contrariwise we must subdue the body and the will of the flesh to the spirit, that the spirit may freely accomplish the will of God in all things : for otherwise we shall never be partakers of His promise, with the true children of Abraham. For as St. Paul saith, They which are the children of the flesh are not the children of God :

if we shall live according to the flesh, we shall die. For to be carnally minded is death ; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace : because that the fleshly minded is enmity to God ; for it is not obedient to the law of God, neither, can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Now choose you which way you will take : either the narrow way that leadeth unto life, which Christ Himself and His faithful followers have gone through before ; or else the broad pathway that leadeth to destruction, which the wicked worldlings take their pleasure in for a while. I for my part have now written this short admonition unto you of good will (as God be my witness), to exhort you to that way which at length you yourselves should prove and find to be best, yea, and rejoice thereof. And I do not only write this, but I will also (with the assistance of God's grace) ratify, confirm, and seal the same with the effusion of my blood, when the full time shall be expired that He hath appointed ; which (so far forth as I may judge) must needs be within these few days. Therefore I now bid you all most heartily farewell in the Lord ; whose grace be with your spirit. Amen. Watch and pray, watch and pray. Pray, pray. So be it.

JOHN HULLYER.

Robert Glover.

Three brothers, WILLIAM, JOHN, and ROBERT GLOVER, gentlemen of Coventry, all embraced the Reformed Faith, and when Mary's persecutions began, John was singled out to be apprehended. As soon as the Mayor of Coventry received instructions to that effect, he secretly gave the brothers notice; that they might escape; this William and John succeeded in doing; but when the Sheriff's officers searched their house they discovered Robert in bed, ill. Although the Mayor tried to screen him and declared he was not the man they sought, the officer insisted on detaining him until the coming of the Bishop, when he was condemned. Robert Glover felt heavy and weary and little fitted for martyrdom, and though he prayed continually for strength could find no comfort. On the day, however, on which he was to suffer, on coming in sight of the stake, he suddenly felt himself strong, and cried aloud, "He is come! He is come!" with such joy and alacrity as one seeming rather to be risen from some deadly danger to liberty and life, than as one passing out of the world by any pains of death. He sealed his faith with his life on September 20th, 1555.

TO MY MOST ENTIRELY BELOVED WIFE, MARY
GLOVER.

THE peace of conscience which passeth all understanding, the sweet consolation, comfort, strength, and boldness of the Holy Ghost, be continually increased in your heart, through a fervent, earnest, and steadfast faith in our most dear and only Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

I thank you heartily, most loving wife, for your letters sent unto me in my imprisonment. I read them with tears, more than once or twice; with tears (I say) for joy and gladness, that God had wrought in you so merciful a work; first, an unfeigned repentance, secondly, an humble and hearty reconciliation, thirdly, a willing submission and obedience to the will of God in all things. Which when I read in your letters, and judged them to proceed from the bottom of your heart, I could not but be thankful to God, rejoicing with tears for you, and these His great mercies poured upon you. These your letters, and the hearing of your most godly proceedings and constant doings from time to time, have much relieved and comforted me at all times: and shall be a goodly testimony with you at the great day, against many worldly and dainty dames, which set more by their own pleasure and pelf in this world than by God's glory; little regarding, as it appeareth, the everlasting health of their own souls or others. My prayer shall be, whilst I am in this world, that God, which of His great mercy hath begun His good work in you, will finish it to the glory of His name; and by the mighty power and inspiration of His Holy Spirit so strengthen, establish, and confirm you in all His ways to the end that we may together show forth His praise in the world to come, to our unspeakable consolation everlastingly. Amen.

So long as God shall lend you continuance in this miserable world, above all things give yourself continually to prayer, lifting up, as St. Paul saith, clean or pure hands

without anger, wrath, or doubting ; forgiving (as he saith also) if you have any thing against any man, as Christ forgiveth us. And that we may be the better willing to forgive, it is good often to call to remembrance the multitude and greatness of our own sins, which Christ daily and hourly pardoneth and forgiveth us ; and then we shall, as St. Peter affirmeth, be ready to cover and hide the offences of our brethren, be they never so many. And because God's Word teacheth us, not only the true manner of praying, but also what we ought to do or not do in the whole discourse and practice of this life ; what pleaseth or displeaseth God ; and that, as Christ saith, the Word of God that He hath spoken shall judge in the last day : let your prayer be to this end specially, that God of His great mercy would open and reveal more and more daily to your heart the true sense, knowledge, and understanding of His most Holy Word ; and give you grace in your living to express the fruits thereof. And forasmuch as it is, as the Holy Ghost calleth it, the word of affliction, that is, it is seldom without hatred, persecution, peril, danger of loss of life and goods, and whatsoever seemeth pleasure in this world, as experience teacheth you in this time ; call upon God continually for His assistance always, as Christ teacheth, casting your accounts what it is likely to cost you, endeavouring yourself, through the help of the Holy Ghost, by continuance of prayer, to lay your foundation so sure, that no storm or tempest shall be able to overthrow or cast it down ; remembering always (as Christ saith) Lot's wife,

that is, to beware of looking back to that thing that displeaseth God. And because nothing displeaseth God so much as idolatry, that is, false worshipping of God otherwise than His Word commandeth; look not back (I say), nor turn not your face to their idolatrous and blasphemous massing, manifestly against the Word, practice, and example of Christ: as it is most manifest to all that have any taste of the true understanding of God's Word, that there remaineth nothing in the Church of England at this present profitable or edifying to the Church and congregation of the Lord; all things being done in an unknown tongue, contrary to the express commandment of the Holy Ghost.

They object that they be the Church, and therefore they must be believed. My answer was, The Church of God knoweth and acknowledgeth no other head but Jesus Christ, the Son of God; whom ye have refused, and chosen the man of sin, the son of perdition, enemy to Christ, the devil's deputy and lieutenant, the pope. Christ's Church heareth, teacheth, and is ruled by His word; as He saith, My sheep hear My voice. If you abide in Me and My word in you, you be My disciples. Their church repelleth God's word, and forceth all men to follow their traditions. Christ's Church dare not add or diminish, alter or change His blessed Testament: but they be not afraid to take away all that Christ instituted, and go a whoring (as the Scripture saith) with their own inventions, *et lætari super operibus manuum suarum*—to glory and rejoice in the works of their own hands.

The Church of Christ is, hath been, and shall be in all ages, under the cross, persecuted, molested, and afflicted; the world ever hating them, because they be not of the world. But these persecute, murder, slay, and kill such as profess the true doctrine of Christ, be they in learning, living, conversation, and other virtues, never so excellent. Christ and His Church reserved the trial of their doctrine to the word of God, and gave the people leave to judge thereof by the same Word; Search the Scriptures. But this church taketh away the word from the people, and suffer neither learned nor unlearned to examine or prove their doctrine by the Word of God. The true Church of God laboureth by all means to resist and withstand the lusts, desires, and motions of the world, the flesh, and the devil. These, for the most part, give themselves to all voluptuousness, and secretly commit such things, which (as St. Paul saith) it is shame to speak of. By these and such like manifest probations, they do declare themselves to be none of the Church of Christ, but rather of the synagogue of Satan. It shall be good for you oftentimes to confer and compare their proceedings and doings, with the practice of those whom the Word of God doth teach to have been true members of the Church of God; and it shall work in you both knowledge, erudition, and boldness to withstand with suffering their doings. I likened them therefore to Nimrod, whom the Scripture calleth a mighty hunter or a stout champion; telling them that that which they could not have by the Word, they would have by the sword, and be the church

whether men will or no ; and called them, with good conscience, as Christ called their forefathers, the children of the devil ; and as their father the devil is a liar and murderer, so their kingdom and church (as they call it) standeth by lying and murdering.

Have no fellowship with them therefore, my dear wife, with their doctrine and traditions, lest you be partaker of their sins ; for whom is reserved a heavy damnation, without speedy repentance. Beware of such as shall advertise you something to bear with the world, as they do, for a season. There is no dallying with God's matters ; It is a fearful thing (as St. Paul saith) to fall into the hands of God. Remember the Prophet Elias ; Why halt ye on both sides ? Remember what Christ saith : He that putteth his hands to the plough, and looketh back, is not worthy of Me. And seeing God hath hitherto allowed you as a good soldier in the foreward, play not the coward, neither draw back to the rearward. St. John numbereth among them that shall dwell in the fiery lake such as be fearful in God's cause. Set before your eyes always the examples of such as have behaved themselves boldly in God's cause ; as Stephen, Peter, Paul, Daniel, the three children, the widow's sons, and in your days Ann Askew, Laurence Saunders, John Bradford, with many other faithful witnesses of Christ. Be not afraid in nothing, saith St. Paul, of the adversaries of Christ's doctrine ; the which is to them the cause of perdition, but to you, of everlasting salvation. Christ commandeth the same, saying, Fear them not. Let us

not follow the example of him which asked time first to take leave of his friends. If we so do, we shall find few of them that will encourage us to go forward in our business, please it God never so much. We read not that James and John, Andrew and Simon, when they were called, put off the time till they had known their father's and friends' pleasure: but the Scripture saith, They forsook all, and by-and-by followed Christ. Christ likened the Kingdom of God to a precious pearl, the which whosoever findeth, selleth all that he hath for to buy it. Yea, whosoever hath but a little taste or glimmering how precious a treasure the Kingdom of Heaven is, will gladly forego both life and goods for the obtaining of it. But the most part, now-a-days, be like to Æsop's cock; which when he had found a precious stone, wished rather to have found a barley-corn. So ignorant be they how precious a jewel the Word of God is, that they choose rather the things of this world; which, being compared to it, be less in value than a barley-corn.

If I would have given place to worldly reasons, these might have moved me. First the foregoing of you and my children: the consideration of the state of my children, being yet tender of age and young, apt and inclinable to virtue and learning, and so having the more need of my assistance, being not altogether destitute of gifts to help them withal: possessions above the common sort of men: because I was never called to be a preacher or minister: and (because of my sickness) fear of death in imprisonment before I should come to my answer, and so

my death to be unprofitable. But these and such like, I thank my heavenly Father (which of His infinite mercy inspired me with His Holy Ghost, for His Son's sake, my only Saviour and Redeemer), prevailed not in me: but when I had, by the wonderful permission of God, fallen into their hands, at the first sight of the Sheriff, nature a little abashed; yet or ever * I came to the prison, by the working of God and through His goodness, fear departed. I said to the Sheriff, at his coming unto me, What matter have you, master Sheriff, to charge me withal? He answered, You shall know when you come before the masters; and so taking me with him, I looked to have been brought before the masters, and to have heard what they could have burdened me withal. But, contrary to my expectation, I was committed forthwith to the jail, not being called to my answer, little justice being showed therein. But the less justice a man findeth at their hands, the more consolation in conscience shall he find from God; for whosoever is of the world, the world will love him. After I came into prison, and had reposed myself there a while, I wept for joy and gladness my belly full, musing much of the great mercies of God, and as it were, saying to myself after this sort; O Lord, who am I, on whom thou shouldest bestow thus Thy great mercy, to be numbered among the saints that suffer for Thy Gospel's sake? And so, beholding and considering on the one side my imperfection, unableness, sinful misery, and

* Before.

unworthiness, and on the other side the greatness of God's mercy, to be called to so high a promotion, was, as it were, amazed and overcome for a while with joy and gladness, concluding thus with myself in my heart; O Lord, that showest power in weakness, wisdom in foolishness, mercy in sinfulness, who shall let * Thee to choose where and whom Thou wilt? As I have zealously loved the confession of Thy Word, so ever thought I myself to be most unworthy to be partaker of the affliction for the same.

Not long after, came unto me Master W. Brasbridge, Master C. Phinees, Master N. Hopkins, travailing with me,† to be dismissed upon bonds; to whom my answer was (to my remembrance) after this sort: Forasmuch as the Masters have imprisoned me having nothing to burden me withal, if I should enter into bonds, I should in so doing accuse myself. And seeing they have no matter to lay to my charge, they may all well let me pass without bonds as with bonds. Secondly, if I shall enter into bonds, covenant, and promise to appear, I shall do nothing but excuse, colour, and cloke their wickedness, and endanger myself nevertheless, being bound by my promise to appear. They alleged many worldly persuasions unto me to avoid the present peril; and also how to avoid the forfeiture, if I break my promise. I said unto them, I had cast my pennyworth, by God's help. They undertook also to make the bond easy.

* Hinder.

† Persuading me.

And when they were somewhat importune, I said to Master Hopkins that liberty of conscience was a precious thing ; and took as it were a pause, lifting up my heart to God earnestly for His aid and help, that I might do the thing that might please Him. And so, when they had let their suit fall, my heart, methought, was wonderfully comforted. Master Dudly communed with me in like manner ; whom I answered in effect as I did before. Afterwards debating the matter with myself, these considerations came to my head : I have from time to time with good conscience (God I take to record) moved all such as I had conference withal, to be no dalliers in God's matters ; but to show themselves, after so great a light and knowledge, hearty, earnest, constant, and stable in so manifest a truth, and not to give place one jot contrary to the same. Now, thought I, if I shall withdraw myself, and make any shifts to pull my own neck out of the collar, I shall give great offence to my weak brethren in Christ, and advantage to the enemies to slander God's Word. It will be said, He hath been a great boldener of others, to be earnest and fervent to fear no worldly perils or dangers ; but he himself will give no such example.

Wherefore I thought it my bounden duty both to God and man, being (as it were) by the great goodness of God marvellously called and appointed hereunto, to set aside all fear, perils, and dangers, all worldly respects and considerations : and like as I had heretofore, according to the measure of my small gift, within the compass of my vocation and calling, from the bottom of my heart.

unfeignedly moved, exhorted, and persuaded all that professed God's Word manfully to persist in the defence of the same, not with sword and violence, but with suffering and loss of life, rather than to defile themselves again with the whorish abomination of the Romish Antichrist ; so, the hour being come, with my fact and example to ratify, confirm, and protest the same to the hearts of all true believers. And to this end (by the mighty assistance of God's Holy Spirit) I resolved myself, with much peace of conscience, willingly to sustain whatsoever the Romish Antichrist should do against me ; and the rather because I understood the bishop's coming to be at hand, and considered that poor men's consciences should be then sharply assaulted. So remained I prisoner in Coventry by the space of ten or eleven days, being never called to my answer of the masters, contrary to the laws of the realm, they having neither statute, law, proclamation, letter, warrant, nor commandment for my apprehension. They would have laid all the matter upon the Sumner : who, being examined, denied it before their faces, as one of my friends told me, saying, that he had no commandment concerning me, but for my elder brother. God lay not their extreme doings against me to their charge at the great day !

The second day after the bishop's coming to Coventry, Master Warren came to the Guildhall, and willed the chief jailor to carry me to the bishop. I laid to Master Warren's charge the cruel seeking of my death ; and when he would have excused himself, I told him he could

not wipe his hands so: he was as guilty of my blood before God, as though he had murdered me with his own hands. And so he departed from me, saying, I need not to fear, if I would be of his belief. God open his eyes, if it be His will, and give him grace to believe this, which he and all of his inclination shall find (I fear) too true for their parts: that is, that all they which cruelly, maliciously, and spitefully persecute, molest, and afflict the members of Christ for their conscience' sake, and for the true testimony of Christ's Word, and cause them most unjustly to be slain and murdered; without speedy repentance, shall dwell with the devil and his angels in the fiery lake everlasting, where they shall wish and desire, cry and call, but in vain (as their right companion *Epulo* did),* to be refreshed of them whom in this world they contemned, despised, disdained, as slaves, misers, and wretches.

When I came before the bishop in one Denton's house, he began with this protestation, that he was my bishop for lack of a better, and willed me to submit myself. I said to him, I am not come to accuse myself: what have you to lay to my charge? He asked me whether I was learned? I answered, smally learned. Master Chancellor, standing by, said I was a Master of Arts. Then my lord laid to my charge my not coming to the church. Here I might have dallied with him and put him to his proofs, forasmuch as I had not been for a long season in his

* The rich glutton.

diocese, neither were any of the citizens able to prove any such matters against me. Notwithstanding. I answered him through God's merciful help, that I neither had nor would come to their church, as long as their mass was used there, to save (if I had them) five hundred lives. I willed * him to show me one jot or tittle in the Scripture for the proof and defence of the mass. He answered, He came to teach, and not to be taught. I was content (I told him) to learn of him, so far as he was able to teach me by the Word of God. Who shall judge the Word? saith my lord. I answered, Christ was content that the people should judge His doctrine by searching the Scriptures, and so was Paul: methinketh ye should claim no further privilege or pre-eminence than they had. I offered him further, that I was content the Primitive Church next to the apostles' time should judge betwixt him and me. He refused also to be judged by that. Then, he was my bishop, he said, and therefore I must believe him. If you say black is white (my lord), must I also say as you say, and believe the same, because you say it is so? Master Chancellor noted me to be arrogant, because I would not give place to my bishop. I said to my lord, if you will be believed because you be a bishop, why find you fault with the people that believed Master Latimer, Master Ridley, Master Hooper, and the residue of them that were bishops? He answered, Because they were heretics. And may not you err, quoth

* Desired

I, as well as they? I looked for learning at my lord's hand to persuade me, and he oppressed me only with his authority. He said I differed from the church, and asked me where my church was before King Edward's time. I desired him to shew me where their church was in Elias' time, and what outward show it had in Christ's time. My lord said, that Elias' complaint was only of the ten tribes that fell from David's house, whom he called heretics. You be not able to shew, said I, any prophets that the other two tribes had at the same time. My lord making no answer to that, Master Rogers, one of the masters of the city, cometh in the mean season, taking upon him as though he would answer to the text. But my lord forthwith commanded me to be committed to some tower, if they had any besides the common jail; saying, he would, at the end of his visitation of his diocese, weed out such wolves. Master Rogers willed him to content himself for that night till they had taken further order for me. Even where it pleaseth you, said I to my lord, I am content; and so I was returned at that time to the common jail again, from whence I came.

On the Friday morning, being the next day after, I had warning by one of the prisoners to prepare myself to ride with my fellow prisoners the same day to Lichfield, there to be bestowed at the bishop's pleasure. Which tidings at the first something discouraged me; fearing lest I should, by the means of my great sickness through extreme handling, which I looked for, have died in the

prison before I should come to my answer. But I rebuked immediately, with God's word, this infidelity in myself, and by the same corrected mine own mistrust and phantasy, after this manner: What make I of God? Is not His power as great in Lichfield as in Coventry? Doth not His promise extend as well to Lichfield as to Coventry? Was He not with Habakkuk, Daniel, Meshach, and Jeremiah in their most dangerous imprisonments? He knoweth what things we have need of. He hath numbered all the hairs of our head. The sparrow falleth not on the ground without our heavenly Father's will; much more will He care for us, If we be not faithless, whom He hath made worthy to be witnesses of His truth. So long as we put our trust in Him, we shall never be destitute of His help, neither in prison, neither in sickness nor in health, neither in life nor in death, neither before kings nor before bishops; nor the devil himself, much less one of his ministers, shall be able to prevail against us. With such-like meditations, I waxed cheerful and of good consolation and comfort. So that hearing one say that they could not provide horses enough for us, I said, Let them carry us in a dung-cart for lack of horses if they list; I am well content for my part. Notwithstanding, at the request of my friends, I wrote to Master Mayor and his brethren, briefly requiring them that I might make answer here to such things as should be laid to my charge; but I received no answer of my letters to nor fro. I conjectured that when the bishop and the chancellor had seen them, it moved them

the rather to have had me away ; being more desirous, as I suppose, to have had me dispatched privily in prison, than to come openly to my answer. The manner of entreating and using me, at my first coming to prison, did partly declare the same. Certain sergeants and constables of Coventry, being appointed to have the conveying of us to Lichfield, to be delivered there to one Jephcot, the chancellor's man, sent from Coventry with us for the same purpose, we were commanded to horse-back about 11 or 12 of the clock on Friday, being market-day, that we might be the more gazed and wondered at. And to kindle the people's hearts more against us, they did proclaim a letter concerning a proclamation, made for calling in and disannulling of all such books as truly expound and interpret the Scriptures. We came to Lichfield about 4 of the clock at night, and had leave to repose ourselves our supper time ; we inned at the sign of the Swan, where we were entertained friendly and gently. After supper Jephcot repaired to us : whom we entreated that upon sureties we might rest ourselves that night, being unprovided of any thing to help ourselves withal in the prison at that present. He was content at the first, as he seemed : but afterwards, (whether it was by persuasion, or rather, as it seemed to me, he did but of policy put off the time till he had gathered a multitude to stare and wonder upon us, and also that we should provide nothing to ease ourselves withal,) he revoked his promise, and so by consent we were had to the prison, the multitude wondering at us.

I willed * Jephcot before, to execute his office with mercy ; telling him, that they should have judgment without mercy that shewed no mercy. And this mercy I found at his hand. He put me into a prison the same night, where I continued until I was condemned, a place next to the dounge, narrow of rooms, strong of building, and very cold, with small light ; and there alloweth he me a bundle of straw instead of my bed, without chair, form, or anything else to ease myself withal. God of His mercy gave me great patience through prayer that night ; so that, if it had been His pleasure, I could have been contented to have ended my life. But Jephcot and one Percy, the bishop's man, which afterwards was my continual keeper for the most part, came to me in the morning : to whom I said, This is great extremity, God send us patience ; and no more. Then they were content that I should have a bed of mine own procurement. But I was allowed no help, neither night nor day, nor company of any man, notwithstanding my great sickness, nor yet paper, pen, or ink, or books, saving my New Testament in Latin, and a prayer book which I privily stole in.

Within two days after, Master Chancellor, and one Temsey, a prebendary there, came to me into my prison. Master Chancellor exhorted me to conform myself to my lord and to the church. He wished to my soul no more hurt than to his own ; belike because I had laid to his

* Desired.

charge at Coventry the seeking of my blood unjustly and wrongfully. Now thus, the second time, I answered Master Chancellor to his exhortation ; that I refused not to be ruled by that church, that was content to be ordered and governed by the word of GOD. He asked me how I knew the word of God, but by the church : the church sheweth which is the word of God, therefore the church is above the word of God. This is no good reason in learning, said I to Master Chancellor. For it is like unto this : John shewed the people who was Christ, *ergo*, John was above Christ. Or else, I have a man that knoweth not the king, and I tell him who is the king ; am I therefore above the king ? Master Chancellor said, he came not to reason with me ; and so departed. So remained I without any further conference of any man by the space of 8 days, and till the bishop's coming ; in the which time I gave myself continually to prayer, and meditation of the merciful promises of God, made unto all without exception of person, that call upon the name of His dear Son Jesus Christ. I found in myself daily amendment of health of body ; increase of peace in conscience ; and many consolations from God, by the help of His Holy Spirit, and sometimes as it were a taste and glimmering of the life to come ; all for His only Son Jesus Christ's sake : to Him be all praise for ever and ever. Amen.

The enemy ceased not, many times, sundry ways, to assault me, oftentimes objecting to my conscience mine own unworthiness, through the greatness of the benefit,

to be counted among the number of them that should suffer for Christ, or His Gospel's sake. Against him I replied with the word of God in this sort: What were all those whom God had chosen from the beginning, to be His witnesses, and carry His name before the world? Were they not men, as Paul and Barnabas said, similiter obnoxii peccato, as well subject to wickedness, sin, imperfections, as other men be? Even such were Noah, Abraham, David and all the rest. Quis prior dedit illi? as St. Paul saith. Who gave first unto Him? And also, speaking to every man, What hast thou that thou receivedst not? Likewise John, All have received of His fulness: they were no bringers of any goodness to God, but altogether receivers. They chose not God first, but He chose them. They loved not God first, but He loved them first. Yea, He both loved and chose them when they were His enemies, full of sin and corruption, and void of all goodness. Est Dominus omnium, dives in omnes et super omnes invocantis eum. He is and will be still the same God, as rich in mercy, as mighty, as able, as ready, as willing to forgive the sins, without respect of person, to the world's end, of all them that call upon Him. Prope est Dominus omnibus invocantibus eum. God is near, He is at hand, He is with all; with all (I say), and refuseth none, excepteth none, that faithfully in true repentance call upon Him, in what hour, what place, or what time soever it be. It is no arrogancy nor presumption in any man, to burthen God (as it were) with His promise, and of duty to claim and challenge

His aid, help, and assistance in all our perils, dangers, and distress ; calling upon Him, not in the confidence of our own godliness, but in the trust of His promises made in Christ ; in whom and by whom, and for whose sake, whosoever boldly approacheth to the mercy-seat of the Father, is sure to receive whatsoever is expedient or necessary either for body or soul, in more ample ways and large manner, than he can well wish, or dare desire. His word cannot lie : Call upon Me in the day of trouble, and I will hear thee, and thou shalt praise Me.

I answered the enemy also on this manner : I am a sinner, and therefore not worthy to be a witness of His truth. What then ? Must I deny His word, because I am not worthy to profess it ? What bring I to pass in so doing, but add sin to sin ? What is greater sin, than to deny the truth of Christ's Gospel ? As Christ Himself beareth witness, He that is ashamed of Me or of My words, of him I will be also ashamed before My Father and all His angels. I might also by like reason forbear to do any of God's commandments. When I am provoked* to pray, the enemy may say unto me, I am not worthy to pray, therefore I shall not pray. And so in like manner of all the commandments : I shall not forbear swearing, stealing, murdering, because I am not worthy to do any commandment of God. These be the delusions of the devil, and Satan's suggestions ; which must be overcome by continuance of prayer, and with the word of God applied accord-

* Exhorted.

ing to the measure of every man's gift, against all assaults of the devil.

At the bishop's first coming to Lichfield after mine imprisonment, I was called into a by-chamber next to my prison, to my lord. Before whom when I came, and saw none but his officers, chaplains, and servants, except it were an old priest, I was partly amazed, and lifted up my heart to God for His merciful help and assistance. My lord asked me how I liked my imprisonment. I gave him no answer touching that question. He proceeded to persuade me to be a member of his church, which had continued so many years. As for our church, as he called it, [it] was not known, he said, but lately in king Edward's time. I profess myself to be a member of that church, said I, that is builded upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the head corner-stone; and so alleged the place of St. Paul to the Ephesians. And this church hath been from the beginning, said I, though it bear no glorious show before the world, being ever for the most part under the cross and affliction, contemned, despised, and persecuted. My lord, on the other side, contended that they were the church. So cried all the clergy against the prophets at Jerusalem, saying, Templum Domini, templum Domini, the church, the church. And always when I was about to speak any thing, my lord cried, Hold thy peace, hold thy peace; I command thee by the virtue of obedience to hold thy peace :—calling me a proud, arrogant heretic. I willed*

* Desired.

my lord to burthen me with some speciality, and then to convince me with some Scriptures and good learning. Then my lord began to move certain questions. I refused to answer him in corners, requiring that I might make my answer openly. He said I should answer him there. I stood with him upon that point, until he said I should to prison again, and there have neither meat nor drink till I had answered him. Then I lifted up my heart to God, that I might stand and agree with the doctrine of His most holy word.

The first question was this: How many sacraments Christ instituted to be used in the church. The sacrament of Baptism, said I, and the sacrament that He instituted at His last supper. No more? said he. To all those that declare a true and unfeigned repentance, a sure hope, trust, and confidence in the death of Christ, to such the ministers, I grant, have authority to pronounce, by the power of God's word, the remission of their sins. Here interrupting me, he would needs bear me in hand that I called this a sacrament. I would not greatly contend with him in that point, because the matter was of no great weight or importance; although he, in so doing, did me wrong, for I called it not a sacrament. He asked me further, whether I allowed their confession. I said, No. Then he would know my mind, what I thought of the presence of Christ's body in the sacrament. I answered, that their mass was neither sacrifice nor sacrament, because (said I) you have taken away the true institution; which when you restore again, I will tell

you my judgment concerning Christ's body in the sacrament.

Here was he prevented that he could not make an end of this matter which he most godly had begun ; by reason of the writ which came from London concerning his execution and martyrdom, which he suffered shortly after.

TO THE MAYOR OF COVENTRY AND HIS BRETHREN.

I beseech you to understand, that it is not unknown, as well to the keeper of the jail, as to the inhabitants about me where I dwell, that I am a man subject to very great sickness, and have been by the space of seven years and more ; so that it is not like that I shall be removed without peril and danger of my life. And because I was here committed to ward by your appointment, I would gladly here answer to such things as shall be laid to my charge. If I may obtain this of you, I have cause thankfully to reknowlege your indifferency *: if otherwise, I pray God it be not laid to your charge at the great day, where every man shall have just judgment without respect of person.

Your prisoner in the Lord, always mindful of you in my poor prayer,

ROBERT GLOVER.

TO HIS WIFE, CHILDREN, AND WHOLE FAMILY,

As his last farewell to them for ever in this world.
The mighty consolation of the Holy Spirit, from our

* Acknowledge your impartiality.

most loving and merciful Father, for His dear Son's sake Jesus Christ, continually dwell in your heart, my dear—and to the end, most faithful and godly—wife. His holy angels pitch their tents about you and your little ones, and suffer you not to be tempted above your strength—so to the end, that we may dwell all together with our loving and merciful God and Father, and sing praises to His name, with His angels and archangels, for ever and ever. Amen.

I bid you all farewell in the Lord. Continue in prayer, and rejoice in hope ; be patient in your affliction ; comfort your heart always with the life to come. For my departure, consider how often I have been going from you through my long sickness ; and yet God, my most loving and merciful Father, marvellously hath reserved me to this high promotion, for the which you ought to give hearty thanks, if you love His glory, and my eternal joy and felicity. And if you shew yourselves obedient children to your heavenly Father, He will love you, keep you, help you, so that you shall lack nothing expedient for soul or body ; and in the end, when His good will and pleasure is, you shall come to me, and perpetually enjoy me and I you, and we all shall have the fulness of that joy that shall never be taken from you.

Ye little ones, love your mother ; yield reverend obedience unto her in all godliness. Be not unkind nor unthankful. Pray for her preservation and continuance amongst you. Pray that she may be an ensample to you in all the ways of the Lord. And how ye may behave

yourselves towards God, your mother, and all other estates and degrees, let always God's word be your rule. Exercise yourselves therein night and day, joining always prayer therewith. God send you a good guide, and good passage, if it be His will, out of this idolatrous and bloody realm. And as Christ committed His mother to John, so I commit you in this world to the angel of God, Augustine Berneher. His advertisement * if you will follow, I trust you shall not decline from the fear of God. Be thankful for him, and cease not to pray for his preservation. And thus I commit all, as well servants as wife and children, to the merciful tuition † of our most merciful God and Father, and to His dear Son our only Saviour Jesus Christ, with the Holy Ghost the Comforter ; to Him be all praise, now and for ever. Amen. I heartily forgive you all, and doubt not but that you do the same to me.

ROBERT GLOVER.

Be faithful unto the death, and I will give thee the crown of life. Apoc. 2.

[A full and interesting Narrative of the persecutions and sufferings of Robert Glover and his family has been published by the Rev. B. Richings.]

* Advice.

† Care.

Robert Smith.

ROBERT SMITH was a provost of Eton, and in the service of Sir Thomas Smith—he also held a clerkship of the value of £10 a year in the college at Windsor; but his chief pleasure lay in painting. Being known as an earnest Protestant, he was, on the accession of Mary to the throne, at once deprived of his clerkship, and shortly afterwards summoned to appear before Bonner, who condemned him to death. Whilst in prison, awaiting his end, Robert Smith did much to encourage his fellow sufferers for conscience' sake, and also towards the improvement of such prisoners who were suffering for criminal offences. He died joyfully, at Uxbridge, on August 8th, 1555.

TO ALL THEM WHICH LOVE GOD UNFEIGNEDLY,
And intend to lead a godly life according to His Gospel,
and to persevere in His truth unto the end, grace
and peace from God the Father, and from our
Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

BE not afraid, most dearly beloved in our Saviour Jesus Christ, at these most perilous days, wherein, by the sufferance of God, the prince of darkness is broken loose, and rageth in his members against the elect of God with all cruelty, to set up again the kingdom of Antichrist: against whom see that ye be strong in faith, to resist his most devilish doctrine with the pure gospel of God; arming yourselves with patience, to abide what-

soever shall be laid to your charge for the truth's sake, knowing that thereunto ye be called, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him. Oh, how happy are ye, that in the sight of God are counted worthy to suffer for the testimony of Christ! Quiet therefore yourselves, oh my loving brethren, and rejoice in Him for whom ye suffer: for unto you do remain the unspeakable joys, which neither the eye hath seen, nor the ear hath heard, neither the heart of man is able to comprehend in any wise. Be not afraid of the bodily death, for your names are written in the book of life. And the prophet doth record, that, in the sight of the Lord, precious is the death of His saints. Watch therefore and pray, that ye be not prevented in the day of temptation. Now cometh the day of your trial, wherein the waters rage, and the stormy winds blow. Now shall it appear whether ye have builded upon the fleeting sand, or upon the unmoveable rock Christ, which is the foundation of the apostles and prophets; whereon every house that is builded groweth into an holy temple of the Lord, by the mighty working of the Holy Ghost. Now approacheth the day of your battle, wherein it is required that ye shew yourselves the valiant soldiers of Jesus Christ, with the armour of God, that ye may be able to stand fast against all the crafty assaults of the devil. Christ is your Captain, and ye be His soldiers, whose cognizance is the cross, to the which He willingly humbled Himself even unto the death, and thereby spoiled His enemies; and now triumpheth He over them in the

glory of His Father, making intercession for them that here do remain to suffer the afflictions that are to be fulfilled in His mystical body. It behoveth therefore every one, that will be counted His scholar, to take up his own cross and follow Him, as ye have Him for an ensample ; and I assure you that, He being on your side, nothing shall be able to prevail against you. And that He will be with you even to the world's end, ye have His promise in the 28th of Matthew. He will go forth with His host, as a conqueror to make a conquest. He is the man that sitteth on the white horse crowned with immortality ; and ye, brethren, are His fellowship, whereof He is the head. He hath your heart in His hand as a bow bent after His godly will ; He shall direct the same according to the riches of His glory, into all spiritual and heavenly cogitations. He is faithful and will not suffer you to be further assaulted than He will give you strength to overcome ; and in the most danger He will make a way, that ye may be able to bear it.

Shrink not, therefore, dear hearts, when ye shall be called to answer for the hope that is in you ; for we have the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, which was sent from the heavens to teach us. He shall speak in us, He shall strengthen us ; what is he then that shall be able to confound us ? Nay, what tyrant is he that now boasteth himself of his strength to do mischief, whom the Lord shall not with the same Spirit, by the mouth of His servants, strike down to hell-fire ? Yea, suddenly will the Lord bring down the glory of the proud Philistines, by the

hands of His servant David. Their strength is in spear and shield, but our help is in the name of the Lord, which made both heaven and earth. He is our buckler and our wall; a strong tower of defence. He is our God, and we are His people. He shall bring the counsels of the ungodly to nought. He shall take them in their own net. He shall destroy them in their own inventions. The right hand of the Lord shall work this wonder. His power is known among the children of men. Their fathers have felt it and are confounded. In like manner shall they know that there is no counsel against the Lord, when their secrets are opened to the whole world, and are found to be against the living God. Work they never so craftily, build they never so strongly, yet down shall their rabble fall, and the builders themselves shall then be scattered upon the face of the earth, as accursed of God. The just shall see this and be glad, and praise the name of the Lord, that so marvellously hath dealt with His servants, as to bring their enemies under their feet. Then shall the fearful seed of Cain tremble and quake. Then shall the mocking Ishmaelites be cast out of the door. Then shall the proud Nimrod see his labour lost. Then shall the beast of Babylon be trodden under foot. Then shall the Scribes and Pharisees for madness fret and rage. Then shall their painted wisdom be known for extreme folly. Then shall the bloody dragon be void of his prey. Then shall the whore of Babylon receive double vengeance. Then shall they scratch their crowns for the fall of their master's harlot, whom they now serve

for filthy lucre, when no man will buy their wares any more. Then shall the popish priesthood cry we alway * with care, even when the Lord shall help His servants which day is not far off, the day wherein the kingdom of Antichrist shall have an end, and never arise any more. In the mean time, abide in certain and sure hope, cleaving unto the promises of God, which in their own time shall be fulfilled. Acquit yourselves like men against the enemies of God, in all humbleness of mind, strong in spirit, to acknowledge one God, one holy Saviour Jesus Christ, one only everlasting and sufficient sacrifice for the remission of sins, even the precious body of the Lord Jesus, once offered for all, and forever : which now sitteth on the right hand of God, and from thence shall He come to judge both the quick and the dead at the last day : and until that time occupieth that blessed body none other place to dwell in, to be kept in, to be closed in, but only in the heavens, even in the glorious majesty of GOD, personally abiding there in the flesh, not coming down from thence till the last hour. And as He never ceaseth to be man, so doth He never lose the similitude of man ; His body there hath his lineaments, He leaveth them not ; so hath that body there His highness, and shrinketh not, and his manly shape ; He altereth not at any time. He is, in that He took of the Virgin Mary, a natural man in all conditions except sin. And what He took of His blessed mother, by the working of the Holy

* Well-a-day.

Ghost, He took it for ever, and will not exchange the same for any other. He took the shape of a man with the substance of His manhood, in one sacred womb. There were they coupled together by the Holy Ghost, never to be divided asunder. He retaineth the one with the other, inseparably. As He will not alter the substance of His flesh into the substance of bread, no more will He alter the shape of His body into the form of bread. There cannot be a greater absurdity against the truth, than to think that He would leave the shape that He took in the Virgin's womb, being an accident unto His manhood, and join unto the same a wafer cake baked in an oven, or between a pair of irons. As He is in heaven very man, one only Mediator between God and man, even the man Christ Jesus, He it is that is the propitiation for our sins. Be bold, therefore, to confess this most pure and apostolical doctrine ; and also that all favour, mercy, and forgiveness cometh only by Him. He only of God the Father was made for us all wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. All these are the gifts of God the Father, freely given unto us by Christ Jesus, God and man, through faith in His blood, and not by the merits of men. Gifts they are, I say, freely given unto us of favour, without our desert, by believing and not by deserving. To this do the law and the prophets bear witness.

This doctrine have all the blessed martyrs of Christ's church witnessed with their blood to be true. To this truth have all the consciences of all true believers sub-

scribed, ever since the ascension of Christ. This witness is not of man but of God. What better quarrel can ye then have to give your lives for than the truth itself? That man that giveth his life for the truth taketh the readiest way to life. He that hath the pope's curse for the truth is sure of Christ's blessing. Well then, my brethren, what shall now let,* but that ye go forward as ye have begun? Nay, rather run with the runners, that ye may obtain the appointed glory. Hold on the right way, look not back, have the eye of your heart fixed upon God, and so run that ye may get hold of it. Cast away all your worldly pelf, and worldly respects, as, the favour of friends, the fear of men, sensual affection, respect of persons, honour, praise, shame, rebuke, wealth, poverty, riches, lands, possessions, carnal fathers and mothers, wife and children, with the love of your own selves; and in respect of that heavenly treasure ye look for, let all these be denied and utterly refused of you, so that in no condition they do abate your zeal, or quench your love towards GOD. In this case make no account of them, but rather repute them as vile, in comparison of everlasting life. Away with them, as thorns that choke the heavenly seed of the gospel where they be suffered to grow. They are burdens of the flesh, which encumber the soul; exchange them therefore for advantage. Doth not he gain, that findeth heavenly and immortal treasure, for earthly and corruptible riches?

* Hinder.

Loses that man anything, which of his carnal father and mother is forsaken, when therefore he is received of God the Father to be His child and heir in Christ? Heavenly, for earthly; for mortal, immortal; for transitory things, permanent—are great gains to a Christian conscience.

Therefore, as I began, I exhort you in the Lord not to be afraid. Shrink not, my brethren, mistrust not God, be of good comfort, rejoice in the Lord, hold fast your faith, and continue to the end. Deny the world, and take up your cross and follow Him which is your loadman, and is gone before. If you suffer with Him, you shall reign with Him. What way can you glorify the name of your heavenly Father better, than by suffering death for His Son's sake? What a spectacle shall it be to the world, to behold so godly a fellowship as you servants of God (in so just a quarrel as the Gospel of Christ is, with so pure a conscience, so strong a faith, and so lively a hope,) to offer yourselves to suffer most cruel torments at the hands of God's enemies, and so to end your days in peace, to receive, in the resurrection of the righteous, life everlasting?

Be strong, therefore, in your battle. The Lord God is on your side, and His truth is your cause; and against you be none but the enemies of the cross of Christ, as the Serpent and his seed, the dragon with his tail, the marked men of the beast, the offspring of the Pharisees, the congregation malignant, the generation of vipers, murderers, as their father the devil hath been from the beginning. To conclude, such as they are the Lord God

hath always abhorred, and in all ages resisted and overthrown. God, from whom nothing is hid, knoweth what they are. He that searcheth the hearts of men, He hath found them out to be crafty, subtle, full of poison, proud, disdainful, stiff-necked, devourers, raveners, and barkers against the truth, filthy and shameless : and therefore doth the Spirit of God, by the mouths of His holy Prophets and Apostles, call them by the names of foxes, serpents, cockatrices, lions, leopards, bulls, bears, wolves, dogs, swine, beasts ; teaching us thereby to understand that their natural inclination is to deceive, poison, and destroy (as much as in them lieth) the faithful and elect of God. But the Lord with His right arm shall defend His little flock against the whole rabblement of these worldlings, which have conspired against Him ; He hath numbered all the hairs of His children's heads, so that not one of them shall perish without His fatherly will. He keepeth the sparrows ; much more will He preserve them whom He hath purchased with the blood of the immaculate Lamb. He will keep them unto the hour appointed, wherein the name of God shall be glorified in His saints. In the mean time let them work their wills, let them envy, let them malign, let them blaspheme, let them curse, ban, betray, whip, scourge, hang, and burn : for by these means God will try His elect as gold in the furnace, and by these fruits shall they also bring themselves to be known what they be, for all their sheep-skins. For as he that in suffering patiently for the Gospel of God, is thereby known to be of Christ : even so in like

wise is the persecutor of him known to be a member of Antichrist. Besides this, their extreme cruelty shall be a mean, the sooner to provoke God to take pity upon His servants, and to destroy them that so tyrannously entreat His people : as we may learn by the histories, as well in the bondage of Israel under Pharaoh in Egypt, as also in the miserable captivity of Judah in Babylon : whereas,* when the people of God were in most extreme thralldom, then did the Lord stretch forth His mighty power to deliver His servants. Though God, for a time, suffer them to be exalted in their own pride, yet shall they not escape His vengeance. They are His rods ; and when He hath worn them to the stumps, then will He cast them into the fire : this shall be their final reward. Our duty is, in the meanwhile, patiently to abide the will of God, which worketh all things for the best.

Thus dealeth He with us, partly for our trial, and partly also for our sins, which we most grievously have committed, to the great slander of His Gospel, whereby the name of God was evil spoken of among His enemies ; for the which He now punisheth us with His fatherly corrections in this world, that we should not be damned with the world. By this means seeketh He His sheep that were lost, to bring them home to the fold again. By this way seeketh He to reform us, that we may be like unto Him, after the image of His Son Jesus Christ, in all holiness and righteousness before Him. Finally, this

* Where.

way useth His godly wisdom, to make us thereby to know Him, and ourselves in Him, that aforetime had in a manner forgotten Him ; praised be His name therefore. And as for these Balaamites, which now do molest us, commit them to the hands of God, give Him the vengeance, and He will reward them. Fall ye to prayer, and let these belly-gods prate. For He is in heaven, and sleepeth not, that keepeth Israel. He is in heaven, that made the seas calm when the disciples were afraid. Let us now faithfully call upon Him, and He will hear us. Let us cry unto the Lord, for He is gracious and merciful. When we are in trouble, He is with us, He will deliver us, and He will glorify us. If we come unto Him, we shall find Him turned unto us. If we repent us of our wickedness done against Him; then shall He take away the plague that He hath devised against us.

Let us therefore earnestly repent, and bring forth the worthy fruits of repentance. Let us study to be His ; then shall we not need to fear what these hypocrites do against us, which with their pretended holiness deceive the hearts of the simple, and abuse the authority of God in His princes, causing them (by their procurement) to testify their ambitious prelacy, and to erect up their idol again with the Romish mass. God, in whose hands are the hearts of kings, open the heart of the Queen's highness, to espy them out what they be, and so to weed them out, that they no longer be suffered to trouble the congregation of God, and to poison the realm with Pope-holy doctrine. God Almighty, for His Son Jesus Christ's sake,

deliver the Queen's highness and this her realm from these proud prelates; which are as profitable in the church as a polecat in the midst of a warren of conies.

To conclude, my brethren, I commit you to God and to the power of His word, which is able to establish you in all truth. His Spirit be with you, and work alway that ye may be mindful of your duty towards Him, whose ye are both body and soul. Whom see that ye love, serve, dread, and obey, above all worldly powers; and for nothing under the heavens, defile your conscience before God. Dissemble not with His word: God will not be mocked: nay, they that dissemble with Him, deceive themselves. Such shall the Lord deny and cast out at the last day: such (I say) as bear two faces in one hood; such as play on both hands; such as deny the known truth; such as obstinately rebel against Him. All such, with their partakers, shall the Lord destroy. God defend you from all such, and make you perfect unto the end. Your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

TO HIS WIFE.

The God and Father eternal, which brought again from death our Lord Jesus Christ, keep thee, dear wife, now and for ever, with thy parents and all thy friends. Amen.

I praise God for His mercy, I am in the same state that you left me in, rather better than worse, looking daily for the living GOD, before whom I hunger full sore to appear, and receive the glory, of which I trust thou art willing to

be a partaker ; I give GOD most hearty thanks therefore, desiring thee, of all loves, to stand fast in that faith which thou hast received. And let no man take away the seed that Almighty God hath sown in thee, but lay hands of everlasting life, which shall ever abide, when both the earth and all earthly friends shall perish ; desiring them also to receive thankfully our trouble, which is momentary and light, and (as St. Paul saith) not worthy of the things which shall be shewed on us : that, we patiently carrying our cross, may attain to the place whither our Saviour Christ is gone before, to the which I beseech God of His mercy bring us speedily. I have been much troubled about your deliverance, fearing much the persuasions of worldlings ; and have found a friend which will (I trust) find a mean for you, if you be not already provided, desiring you in any case to abide such order, as that my friend shall appoint in God. And bear well in mind the words which I spake at our departing ; that as God hath chose us, and made us worthy to suffer with Him, we may endeavour ourselves to follow uprightly in this our vocation ; desiring you to present my hearty commendation to all our friends, and especially to your parents, keeping your matter close in any wise. Give most hearty thanks to my friend, which only for our cause is come to Windsor. Continue in prayer. Do well. Be faultless in all things. Beware of abominations. Keep you clean from sin. Pray for me, as I do for you. I have sent you a piece of gold for a token, and most entirely desire you to send me word if you lack anything.

The Lord Jesus preserve you and yours. Amen.—From
Newgate, the 15th of April.

If you will meet with me again,
Forsake not Christ for any pain.

By your faithful husband,

ROBERT SMITH.

Bartelet Green.

BARTELET GREEN came of a good family, and was well educated, first at preparatory schools, and then at Oxford. At Oxford he attended Peter Martyr's divinity lectures, and became deeply interested in religious questions, of which he still continued the study whilst a student of common law at the Temple. His troubles arose from a letter written by him to a friend in exile, in which he answers that friend's question whether the Queen be still living in the words "The Queen is not yet dead." This letter, with many others, was intercepted, and Green charged with treason, but this charge falling through, he was next examined in religion. Green's answers are not known, but it is clear they were not satisfactory to his judges, for they forthwith committed him to prison. On January 15th, Bonner summoned him to the Consistory of St. Paul's, and demanded his return to the Roman Church. Green refusing, sentence was passed upon him, and he was conveyed to Newgate, there remaining until the 27th of January, 1556, when he was burned at the stake.

TO MY VERY LOVING FRIENDS AND MASTERS, M. GORING,
M. FARNHAM, M. FLETEWODE, M. ROSEWEL, M.
BELL, M. HUSSEY, M. CALTHORPE, M. BOYER,

And other my Masters of the Temple, Bartelet Green
wisheth health of body and soul.

Very friends are they, which are knit together with the
knot of charity. Charity doth not decay, but increase, in
them that die faithfully. Whereof it followeth, that,

though we be absent in body, yet are we present in spirit, coupled together with the unity of faith in the bond of peace, which is love. How is he worthy the name of a friend, that measureth his friendship with the distance of place, or parting of persons? If thy friend be out of sight, is thy friendship ended? If he be gone into the country, wilt thou cease to love him? If he be passed the seas, wilt thou so forsake him? If he be carried into heaven, is charity hindered thereby? On the one side, we have the use * of the fathers from the primitive church, that gave thanks for their friends that died in the faith, to prove that charity died not with death. On the other side, saith Horace, *Coelum non animum mutant, qui trans mare currunt*. What speak I of Horace? Saith not St. Paul the same thing? For we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His blood: yea, we are members one of another. Is the hand or arm, foot or leg, a member, when it is dissevered from the body? How can we be members, except we be joined together? What is this line that coupleth us, but love? When all things shall fail, love faileth never. Hope hath his end, when we get that we hoped for. Faith is finished in heaven. Love endureth for ever: love, I say, that proceedeth of charity. For carnal love (when that which he loved is lost) doth perish with the flesh. Neither was that ever but fleshly love, which by distance of place, or severing of bodies, is parted asunder. If love be the end, or sum of the law;

* Practice.

if heaven and earth shall perish ; if one jot of God's word shall not decay, why should we think that love lasteth not ever? I need not to write much to you, my friends, neither can I have leisure, now that the keepers are risen. But this I say ; if we kept Christ's commandment, in loving each other as He loved us, then should our love be everlasting. This friendship Paul felt, when it moved him to say, that neither length nor breadth (meaning no distance of place), neither height nor depth, should sever him from the love of Christ. Weigh well this place, and mete it with Paul's measures : so shall you find, that, if our love be unfeigned, it can never be ended. Now may you say, Why writest thou this? Forsooth, to the end that, if our friendship be stable, you may accomplish this the last request of your friend, perform after my death the friendship we began in our life, that amity may increase, until God make it perfect at our next meeting together. Master Fletewode, I beseech you remember Wittrance and Cook, two singular men among the common prisoners. Master Farnham and M. Bell, with M. Hussey (as I hope), will dispatch Palmer and Richardson, with his companions. I pray you, M. Calthrop, think on John Grove, an honest poor man, Traiford and Rice Aprice his accomplices. My cousin Thomas Witton, a scrivener in Lombard Street, hath promised to further their delivery : at the least he can instruct you which way to work. I doubt not but that Master Boyer will labour for the goodwife Cooper (for she is worthy to be holpen), and Gerard the Frenchman.

There be also divers other well disposed men, whose deliverance if ye will not labour for, yet I humbly beseech you to seek their relief as you shall see cause; namely of Henry Aprice, Lancelot Hobbs, Lothar, Homes, Carr, and Buckingham, a young man of goodly gifts in wit and learning, and (saving that he is somewhat wild,) likely to do well hereafter. There be also two women; N. Coningham, and Alice Alexander, that may prove honest. For these and all other poor prisoners here, I make this my humble suit and prayer to you all, my masters, and especial good friends, beseeching you of all bonds of amity, for the precious blood of Jesus Christ, in the bowels of mercy, to tender the causes* of miserable captives, help to cloth Christ, visit the afflicted, comfort the sorrowful, and relieve the needy. The very God of peace guide your hearts to have mercy on the poor, and live faithfully together. Amen. This present Monday, when I look to die, and live for ever.

Yours for ever,

BARTELET GREEN.

* Pity the causes.

John Careless.

Early in July, 1556, after a tedious imprisonment in the King's Bench, died John Careless, a Coventry weaver. He was a young man possessing considerable theological information, and of great piety. He left behind him a wife, and family of young children.

TO MY DEAR SISTER M. C.

THE everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual aid, strength, and comfort of His most pure, holy, and mighty Spirit, with the increase of faith and lively feeling of His eternal mercies, be most effectuously wrought in your heart, my dear and faithful sister, to the full accomplishing of that good work which the Lord hath so graciously begun in you; that it may be to the setting forth of His glory, the comfort of His poor afflicted church, and to your own eternal consolation in Him. Amen.

I thank God most heartily for you, my dear heart in the Lord, with all remembrance of you in my prayers, as of duty I am bound, not doubting but you do the same for me, to my great joy and comfort in the midst of my crosses; which daily do increase, yea, and that in such sort, that if the faithful God (by your hearty prayers and others', God's dear children,) did not put to His helping

hand, I should surely sink down under them. Ah, good sister, beg hard of our dear Father for me, that He would shortly tread Satan under my feet ; and that I may play the man in the Lord's battle, as you bid me, and be joyful in my Christ, what pain or peril soever I suffer. And rejoice with me, good sister, in the Lord and let us be merry in Him ; not only to cheer the good hearts of all our faithful friends, but also to anger the cankered heart of Satan, that crooked serpent, our ancient enemy. For I know that there is nothing that can grieve his malicious mind more than the mirth, gladness, and hearty rejoicing of the children of God in their good Christ.

Ah, my faithful friend, if your good heart be heavy, who can make mine light ! If you be sorry, who can make me glad ? But if you be merry and rejoice in the Lord, there shall no trouble make me sad or sorrowful. Be of good cheer, therefore, my good sister, and comfort my sweet brother W. Oh that I might once hear that he and his Bridegroom were in bed both together, and that he had taken a sweet sleep in his lover's arms, as John did upon his lap on the Maundy-night. Commend me unto him most heartily ; and desire him, for the Lord's sake, to fulfil my joy and increase my crown. Bid him be mindful of me in his hearty prayers, as I neither will nor can forget him in mine. Full dear is he unto my soul ; so are you, my good sister, the Lord He knoweth, even so are you ; you have so surely knit me to you with that bond of unfeigned love, whereby you are linked to the children of God. Oh, blessed bond of

perfection and true badge of Christ's disciples! Oh true and unfeigned love, wrought by His Spirit in the hearts of all His elect! This is to us a true sign, and sure seal, that we are the very children of God. This love is that flower that never shall fade, but flourish daily more and more, and be made perfect in that place where faith and hope shall have no office, but possess for ever: that which they have here long looked for with patience. My dear heart, be of good cheer; for though our bodies be here separated asunder for a little time, yet shall the Lord bring us together again, ere it be long, into a place of great joy, where we shall dwell for ever. Yea, God can and will, if He see it good for us, bring us together again in this life, that we may have a merry meeting, and further occasion to praise His holy Name. He can work wonders when Himself listeth. Oh, what it is to dwell under the defence of the Most Highest, and to sit under the shadow of the Almighty? The buggish* bishops cannot make such-a-one afraid; because they cannot take away one hair from our head until God give them leave, which I am sure He will not do, until such time as He shall see it most to His glory, and the profit of His saints; and when that time is once come, who will desire to tarry here any longer?

Thus, dear sister, I have scribbled a few lines to you in haste: I will not say that it shall be my last farewell, although it be very like in this life. Commend me to

* Frightful as bugbears.

my good brethren, Master Heath, Robert Cole, John Lydley, &c. I would be glad to see them, and take my leave of them, if they may do it without danger, as I think they may: but, in no wise, let them not danger themselves for that matter; sure I am, we shall all have a most joyful meeting shortly. God strengthen you all in His truth, and make you instruments of His glory, to defend the gospel of His grace against all sorts of enemies thereof. Amongst whom, methinks I do foresee, dear sister, the great plague that these free-will men shall pour upon the poor afflicted church of God: for without all doubt the dragon will make the river of reproach, which you now sustain for the verity's sake, a great flood or ever it be long; but in the end they shall drink it up all themselves, as they now do that which they spewed forth against our blessed brethren, Bradford and Philpot. And yet the verity doth flourish and shall, spite of the pie;* which grieveth Satan at the heart, and therefore he bestirreth him like a wood lion, knowing that his time is short. The Lord deliver us from these poisoned tongues. Verily, I cannot tell whether I may more lament my long tarrying amongst these Ishmaelites, so given to malice, or the leaving of you and other my dear lovers in the Lord amongst them. The Lord be merciful unto His elect, and shorten these sorrowful days for their sakes, as He hath said He will. Farewell, mine own dear heart, farewell in the Lord Jesus Christ; who

* The pie is the Massbook; so called from being party-coloured and black) like a magpie. — *Johnson*.

pour His Holy Spirit plenteously upon you, that, by the mighty operation of the same, you may daily more and more effectuously feel the 'sure certainty of your eternal salvation in Jesus Christ; that you may ever be able to comfort other with the same comforts, wherewith you are comforted in Him. To whose most merciful defence I do heartily commit you, now and evermore. Amen. The blessing of God be with you all, now and ever. Amen.

Your own poor brother, JOHN CARELESS, prisoner of the Lord, abiding His good pleasure.

TO MY GOOD SISTER M. C.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comforts of His sweet Spirit, be with you, my dear and faithful sister, to the full accomplishment of that good work which He hath most graciously begun in you; that the same may be effectual to the setting forth of His glory, and to your everlasting consolation in Him. Amen.

My loving and faithful sister in the Lord, I thank you for all your loving-kindness shown unto me; but specially for your godly remembrance of me in your fervent and faithful prayers, and for your most godly and comfortable letter, whereby you do not only much increase my joy and comfort, but also put me in remembrance of my duty towards you. Blessed be the Lord our God, which of His great mercy hath so beautified His church in these our days, that even unto many godly women He hath given most excellent gifts of knowledge

and understanding of His truth ; so that they are not only well able to inform their own consciences in all things necessary to salvation, but also most sweetly to comfort their sorrowful brethren and sisters, that sustain any trouble for the testimony of God's truth, yea and that which is more, even in the midst of their great conflicts of conscience. Of which most happy number of godly and virtuous women, my dear heart, you are one, and that of the chiefest ; being plentifully endued with the gifts of God's most gracious Spirit, as it doth full well appear in your daily doings—God only have the praise therefore. Forasmuch then as God hath given you the gift to write, I shall most heartily desire you to let me hear from you sometimes, be it never so little ; for truly I take great comfort and courage thereby, specially in my poor conscience, which is sore assaulted of subtle Satan, and in a manner oppressed of my sins. Pray, dear sister, that God may give me true, hearty, and earnest repentance, and increase my faith : for they are both the good gifts of God only, and far pass the reach of my power to take at my pleasure. Therefore, dear sister, if you will help me to beg the same of our dear loving Father, I am sure that He both can and will give them me in His good time. And as for the fear of death or terror of the fire, I most heartily thank my good God, I feel it not : only it is mine own sins and unthankfulness, which holdeth hard battle, and wageth strong war against me ; which only goeth about to separate me from my good captain Christ, that I should not enjoy His glorious

victory : but, God being on my side (as I am sure He is), that cannot continually prevail against me. Though God for a time permit Satan to take his pleasure on me, as He did upon Job, yet I doubt not but in the end all shall turn to my profit, through the merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ ; to whose most merciful defence I commit you, dear sister, with all the rest of the Lord's elect. Farewell in Christ.

Yours unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELESS.

Pray, pray, pray, pray !

TO MY MOST DEAR AND FAITHFUL BROTHER IN THE
LORD, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, with continual joy, comfort, and quietness of conscience, through the mighty operation of the Holy Ghost, be with you, my most dearly beloved brother V., to the increase of your crown and victory, now and ever. Amen.

I have been often-times earnestly minded to write unto you, my dear heart in the Lord, since I received your most godly and loving letter : but the likelihood and hope which I have often since conceived to see you, and talk with you mouth to mouth, hath caused me to forbear that love hath* so often provoked me unto. But since mine expectation is not yet certified, nor (as far as I can perceive) is like to be in this life, I can no longer forbear

* That which.

the scribbling of these few lines to you. The which I desire you to take in good worth ; for, as I have done the same altogether in haste, so is it the contents of an heart something troubled, and not altogether in so sweet a security as it hath been in times past, and I doubt not but it shall be so full well again.

Ah, my dear brother, if I should not now and then drink with Christ of the bitter cup of inward afflictions, I should too much neglect my duty towards you, and other my dear hearts in the Lord, whom the mighty God hath made worthy to feel, with Christ, the fellowship of His passions.* But blessed be my God, and most dear loving Father, which, of His great mercy and infinite goodness in Christ, will vouch me worthy, with you and other of His dear darlings, to carry as well the inward cross, which is most greivous and heavy, as the outward cross, which is so light and easy. I know there is an exceeding weight of glory prepared for me, although Satan now, by God's permission, seeketh all means possible to persuade me to the contrary, by casting of his clouds and mists over me, that he might darken the love of my dear Lord and Christ, which died for me, yea, and that when I was His utter enemy, and by nature the very child of wrath and perdition : but I know that the love of my Christ, being so great, will burst out again most gloriously. O God, methinks even now I feel it begin to kindle in my breast marvellously. Pray for me, dear heart, pray

* Sufferings.

for me, that my soul may sweetly turn to her old rest again : for verily Satan hath made a sore ruffling with her of late, that he might have bereft her of her virginity, with the fornication of mistrust and infidelity. But I see well, my God is faithful (as St. Paul saith), and will not suffer her to be tempted above the strength He will give her. Pray for me, dear heart, I say again ; and praise God most heartily for His great mercy extended towards me, as by your letter I understand you do : I thank you most heartily therefore, and I promise you (by God's grace) I will never forget you, so long as the breath is in my body ; neither can I though I would.

And now, mine own bowels in the Lord, I long much to hear of your state, which I trust be most happy and blessed. Gladly would I hear that the celestial Bridegroom were at home with you ; and that, in respect of His most blessed and cheerful presence, you had cast away all your mourning garments. Oh that I might once hear you heartily sing with the Spouse this sweet verse : My delight is to sit under the shadow of my Love, for His fruit is full sweet unto my throat : He bringeth me into His wine cellar : His banner spreadeth over me His love ; His left hand lieth under my head, and His right hand shall embrace me, etc. Oh, my dear heart, I am now constrained to end for this time ; but God will send me another, I doubt not, to whose most mercifully defence I do heartily commit you.

Yours unfeignedly,

JOHN CARELESS.

TO MY DEAR BROTHER, T. V.

The everlasting peace of God in Jesus Christ, the continual comforts of His most pure and Holy Spirit, be with you, my most dear friend and faithful brother V., to the increase of your faith, and comfort of your sorrowful spirit which is to the Father a sweet sacrifice through Christ; for whose sake He will never despise your humble and contrite heart, but doth favourably accept the same, and will in most ample wise perform the desire thereof to His glory, and your eternal comfort in Him.

In the midst of my manifold crosses and troubles wherein I am constrained to flee unto God for refuge and succour by earnest and faithful prayer, I cannot forget you, my dear heart in the Lord; but, esteeming your state for mine own, I do pour forth my complaint for you, as I do for myself, and rather more, as I think present need doth require, desiring most heartily to hear of the good success of the same in you. The Lord God for His great mercy's sake accomplish my desire; as I doubt not but He will, when He seeth it good and most to His glory, and to your comfort and commodity.* Oh that I might once see you so merry in Christ as you have just cause to be, that you might say with David Awake, my glory, awake, lute and harp, bring forth the psalter with the merry song, that I might sing a new song of praise and thanksgiving unto the Lord, for the light of His favourable countenance, His help and

* Benefit.

deliverance. Oh, that would refresh me as a most precious oil, and gladden my poor heart, which is assaulted with sorrow more ways than one. I doubt not but the same shall by your means receive much comfort, though for a time it doth mourn with you; that we may be made both glad together, yea and that with such gladness as shall continue for ever. But in the mean space, I say, most happy are you, that so heartily mourn the absence of the Bridegroom. If you were not a wedding child, you could never do it. Only Christ's true disciples do mourn for His absence; therefore shall they doubtless rejoice at His presence, which will be so much more joyful, by how much the absence is more sorrowful. Therefore, my good brother, take a good heart unto you, and be of good cheer. Say, with the prophet David: O, my soul, why art thou so heavy, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Oh, put thy trust in God; for I will yet give Him thanks for the help of His loving countenance, and because He is my God. Read Psalm the 42nd and 43rd for your comfort, and consider that the holy king and prophet, at the making and first saying of them, was even in the same case that you are now in: but he still comforted himself with the sweet promises of God. And so do you, my dear heart, for to you they do as well pertain as they did to him, and as surely shall they be performed upon you, as they were upon Him; for He is one God and dear Father unto you both, and for His mercy, truth and promise sake, He must needs make good unto you all that He

hath said. If His love towards you stood in the respect of your own merit or worthiness, you might well mourn, lament, and complain ; yea, you had good cause to doubt, fear, and mistrust. But seeing He loveth you only for and in Jesus Christ, who is your whole holiness, righteousness, and redemption, lay away all mourning, lamenting, and complaining : banish from you all fear, mistrust, and infidelity : and know that as long as Christ doth continue God's Son, so long must the love of the Father continue towards you immutable, and His good will unchangeable, and cannot be altered through any of your infirmities. For this is most true, that as long as the cause of anything doth last, so long must the effect remain : but Christ is the whole cause why the Father loveth you, and He also continueth for ever : then must I needs conclude, that the love of the Father continueth towards you for ever, and (as the Psalmist most joyfully so often singeth,) His mercy endureth for ever and ever. This is most true, mine own dear heart : although the Lord for a time hide it from your senses that you might be the more earnest in prayer to Him for the feeling of it, and also the more thankful for it when He doth give the lively taste of it, as doubtless He will do or ever it be long : and then shall you be well able to comfort other in the same state that you are now in, with the same comfort wherewith you are, and further shall be, comforted of God.

Therefore lift up your hands that are now a little fallen down : and stretch forth the weak knees of your

troubled mind, which now mourneth with a godly mourning, and therefore shall it be full well comforted with that sweet peace of GOD which passeth all understanding: and you are sure already to enjoy the blessing that Christ gave unto the godly mourners of Sion, upon the mount, at the first sermon that He made. Oh happy V., in whose mourning company I had rather be, than in the house of mirth and banqueting of such as see not what cause they have to mourn and be sorry. But yet, my good brother, use a measure in this your godly mourning, and make not your faithful friends too much sorry for you. Let the persuasions of such godly lovers as you do daily company withal, or rather the persuasions of the Holy Ghost by them, move you to some godly mirth and rejoicing. Consider that you are commanded of God by the mouth of St. Paul thereto. Rejoice in the Lord (saith he), and I say again, Rejoice. Mark how he doubleth the sentence, that we may perceive it is a most earnest and necessary thing he requireth. Obey the commandment of God in this behalf: wherein as you cannot but highly please Him, so I assure you, you shall very much rejoice my poor heart, and the hearts of other which pray for you with mourning tears: and make that cruel enemy Satan and all your adversaries sorry, which will rejoice and laugh to see you mourn. Oh, my good brother, let it manifestly appear that the Lord of His great mercy hath heard our faithful and hearty requests for you. Oh how would that rejoice me, in the midst of my troubles.

Therefore now to conclude (because the darkness constraineth me to make an end for this time,) I say, my dear and faithful brother V., in respect of the great cause you have of your own part through Christ, and for the glory and honour of Almighty God—the comfort, joy, and rejoicing of your dear brethren and sisters in Christ—also your own duty by the commandment of God—and, last of all, to vex, molest, and grieve Satan withal, rejoice in the Lord, and be most heartily glad in Him, who is wholly yours, and you are His, and shall be ever more. Selah.

Farewell, mine own bowels in the Lord, and praise God with joyful lips and a merry heart, and pray for me His most unprofitable servant, which have more cause concerning myself, to lament than any one man living : but my good Bridegroom is present, and biddeth me cast away my mourning garments, and therefore I must needs be merry with Him. Even so He biddeth you to be, by my mouth ; for He is present with you, although for sorrow we cannot know Him, as Magdalene could not in the garden, until He spake unto her. The Lord God speak the words of comfort in your heart ; and open the eyes of your mind, that you may perfectly perceive and feel His blessed presence, and so rejoice in the same for evermore. Amen Comfort your heart in Christ, and cast your care upon Him, for He careth for you.

Your brother in the Lord, abiding His good pleasure,

JOHN CARELESS.

TO HIS WIFE.

As, by the great mercy of God, at the time of His good will and providence appointed, my dearly beloved wife, you and I were joined together in the holy and Christian state of godly matrimony, as well to our great joy and comfort in Christ, as also to the increase of His blessed church and faithful congregation, by having lawful children by and in the same, with the which God of His mercy hath blessed us—praised be His name therefore ; even so now, by His merciful will and divine ordinance, the time is come (so far as I can perceive,) wherein He will, for His glory and our eternal comfort, dissolve the same, and separate us asunder again for a time. Wherefore I thought it good, yea, and my bounden duty, by this simple letter to provoke, stir, and admonish you, to behave yourself in all your doings, sayings, and thoughts, most thankfully unto our good God for the same. And therefore, my dear wife, as you have heartily rejoiced in the Lord, and oftentimes given God thanks for His goodness in bringing us together in His holy ordinance ; even so now I desire you, when this time of our separation shall come, to rejoice with me in the Lord, and to give Him most hearty thanks, that He hath (to His glory and our endless commodity,) separated us again for a little time, and hath mercifully taken me unto Himself, forth of this miserable world, into His celestial kingdom : believing and hoping also assuredly, that God, of His goodness, for His Son Christ's sake, will shortly bring you and your

dear children thither to me, that we may most joyfully together sing praises unto His glorious name for ever. And yet once again I desire you, for the love of God, and as ever you loved me, to rejoice with me, and to give God continual thanks for doing His most merciful will upon me.

I hear say that you do oftentimes use to repeat this godly saying, "The Lord's will be fulfilled." Doubtless it rejoiceth my poor heart to hear that report of you : and for the Lord's sake use that godly prayer continually, and teach your children and family to say the same day and night ; and not only to say it with your tongues, but also with your heart and mind joyfully to submit your will to God's will in very deed ; knowing and believing assuredly that nothing shall come to you, or any of yours, otherwise than it shall be His almighty and fatherly good will and pleasure, and for your eternal comfort and commodity. Which thing to be most true and certain, Christ testifieth in His holy Gospel, saying, Are not two little sparrows sold for a farthing ? and yet not one of them shall perish without the will of your heavenly Father. And He concluded, saying, Fear not ye therefore, for ye are better than many sparrows. As though He should have said, If God have such a respect and care for a poor sparrow, which is not worth one farthing, that it shall not be taken in the lime twig, net, or pitfall, until it be His good will and pleasure ; you may be well assured that not one of you (whom He so dearly loveth, that He hath given His only dear Son for you,) shall perish, or depart

forth of this miserable life without His almighty good will and pleasure.

Therefore, dear wife, put your trust and confidence wholly and only in Him ; and ever pray that His will be fulfilled and not yours, except it be agreeing to His will, the which I pray God it may ever be. Amen. And as for worldly things, take you no care ; but be you well assured, the Lord, your dear God and Father, will not see you nor yours lack, if you continue in His love and childly fear, and keep a clear conscience from all kind of idolatry, superstition, and wickedness, as my trust is that you will do, although it be with the loss and danger of this temporal life. And, good Margaret, fear not them that can but kill the body ; (but yet can they not do that, until God give them leave ;) but fear to displease Him that can kill both body and soul, and cast them into hell-fire. Let not the remembrance of your children keep you from God. The Lord Himself will be a Father and a Mother, better than ever you or I could have been unto them. He Himself will do all things necessary for them ; yea, as much as rock the cradle, if need be. He hath given His holy angels charge over them, therefore commit them unto Him. But if you may live with a clear conscience (for else I would not have you to live,) and see the bringing up of your children yourself, look that you nurture them in the fear of God, and keep them far from idolatry, superstition, and all other kind of wickedness : and for God's sake help them to some learning, if it be possible, that they may increase

in virtue and godly knowledge, which shall be a better dowry to marry them withal, than any worldly substance: and when they be come to age, provide them such husbands as fear God, and love His holy word. I charge you, take heed that you match them with no Papists; and if you live, and marry again yourself (which thing I would wish you to do if need require, or else not,) good wife, take heed how you bestow yourself, that you and my poor children be not compelled to wickedness. But if you shall be able well to live God's true widow, I would counsel you so to live still, for the more quietness of yourself and your poor children. Take heed, Margaret, and play the wise woman's part. You have warning by other, if you will take an example. And thus I commit you and my sweet children unto God's most merciful defence. The blessing of God be with you, and send us a merry meeting together in heaven. Farewell in Christ; farewell mine own dear hearts all. Pray, pray!

TO MY GOOD BROTHER, MASTER JOHN BRADFORD.

The peace of God in Jesus Christ, the eternal comfort of His sweet Spirit, which hath surely sealed you unto eternal salvation, be with you and strengthen you in your joyful journey towards the celestial Jerusalem (my dear friend and most faithful brother Master Bradford,) to the setting forth of God's glory, and to your eternal joy in Christ. Amen.

Ever since that good Master Philpot shewed me your last letter, my dear heart in the Lord, I have continued in

great heaviness and perplexity : not for any hurt or discommodity that I can perceive coming towards you, unto whom doubtless death is made life and felicity, but for the great loss that God's church here in England shall sustain by the taking away of so godly, worthy, and necessary an instrument, as the Lord hath made you to be. Oh, that my life, and a thousand such wretched lives more, might go for yours. Oh, why doth God suffer me and such other caterpillars to live, that can do nothing but consume the alms of the church; and take away you, so worthy a workman and labourer in the Lord's vineyard? But woe be to our sins and great unthankfulness, which is the greatest cause of taking away such worthy instruments of God, as should set forth His glory and instruct His people. If we had been thankful unto God for the good ministers of His word, we had not been so soon deprived both of it and them. The Lord forgive our great ingratitude and sins, and give us true repentance and faith and hold His hand of mercy over us, for His dear Son Christ's sake. Take not away all Thy true preachers forth of this realm, O Lord; but leave us a seed, lest England be made like unto Sodom and Gomorrah, when Thy true Lots be gone. But what go I about to mingle your mirth with my mourning, and your just joy with my deserved sorrow? If I loved you indeed, as I have pretended, I should surely rejoice with you most heartily, and praise God on your behalf from the very bottom of my heart.

* Disadvantage. •

I should praise God day and night, for your excellent election in and through His great mercy, and should give Him most humble thanks for your vocation by His Gospel, and your true knowledge in the same. I should earnestly praise Him for your sweet justification, whereof you are most certain by God's grace and Spirit, and should instantly * pray unto Him for your glorification, which shall shortly ensue. I should rejoice and be glad to see you so dignified by the crown of martyrdom, and to be appointed to that honour to testify His truth, and to seal it with your blood. I should highly extol the Lord, who hath given you a glorious victory over all your enemies, visible and invisible, and hath given you grace and strength to finish the tower that you have begun to build. Finally, if I loved you, I should most heartily rejoice and be glad, to see you delivered from this body of sin and vile prison of the flesh ; and brought into that heavenly tabernacle, where you shall be safely kept, and never offend Him more. This and much more should I do, if I had a good heart towards God, or you His dear child. But alas, I am an hypocrite, and do seek nothing but mine own commodity.† I would have God's everlasting providence give place to my peevish will and purpose, although it were to the hindrance of His glory and your sweet commodity. God forgive me my horrible ingratitude, sins, and offences against Him : and, good brother, do you forgive me my great negligence and unthankful-

* Earnestly.

. † Profit.

ness towards you ; and henceforth, I promise you, I will put my will to God's will, and pray that the same may be fulfilled in you, so long as you be on this earth ; and when you are taken hence, I will most heartily praise the Lord for you, so long as I have my being in this world. Ah, my dear heart, now I must take my leave of you, and, as I think, my *ultimum Vale* * in this life ; but in the life to come I am right well assured we shall merrily meet together, and that shortly, I trust. And in taking of my leave of you, my dear heart in the Lord, I shall desire you faithfully to remember all the sweet messages that the Lord, our good God and most dear loving Father, hath sent you, by me His most unworthy servant ; which as they are most true, so shall they be most truly accomplished upon you eternally. And for the more assurance and certificate thereof to your godly conscience, He hath commanded me to repeat the same unto you again, in His own name and word. Therefore now give ear, and faithful credence. Hearken, O ye heavens, and thou earth give ear, and bear me witness at the great day that I do here, faithfully and truly, the Lord's message unto His dear servant, his singularly beloved and elect child John Bradford. John Bradford, thou man so especially beloved of God, I pronounce and testify unto thee, in the word and name of the Lord Jehovah, that all thy sins, whatsoever they be, be they never so many, so grievous, or so great, be fully and freely pardoned, released,

* Last farewell.

and forgiven thee, by the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, thine only Lord and sweet Saviour, in whom thou dost undoubtedly believe. Christ hath cleansed thee with His blood, and clothed thee with His righteousness, and hath made thee in the sight of God His Father without spot or wrinkle. So that when the fire doth his appointed office, thou shalt be received as a sweet burnt sacrifice into heaven, where thou shalt joyfully remain in God's presence for ever, as the true inheritor of His everlasting kingdom ; unto the which thou wast undoubtedly predestinate and ordained by the Lord's unfallible purpose and decree, before the foundation of the world was laid. And that this is most true that I have said, I call the whole Trinity, the almighty and eternal majesty of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to my record at this present ; whom I humbly beseech to confirm and establish in thee the true and lively feeling of the same. Amen. Selah. Now with a merry heart and a joyful spirit, something mixed with lawful tears, I take my farewell of you, mine own dear brother in the Lord ; who send us shortly a merry meeting in His kingdom, that we may both sing praises together unto Him, with His holy angels and blessed spirits, for ever and ever. Farewell, thou blessed of the Lord, farewell in Christ ; depart unto thy rest in the Lord, and pray for me, for God's sake.

As I had made an end of this simple letter, I heard some comfort both of good Master Philpot's servant and yours ; but alas, I do scarcely believe them. Well, I

will hope in God, and will pray all night that God will send me some comfort to-morrow; and if the Lord give you sparing to-morrow, let me hear four words of comfort from you, for God's sake. The blessing of God be with you, now and for ever. Amen.

Yours for ever in the Lord Jesus,
JOHN CARELESS,
Living in hope against hope.

VERSES BY JOHN CARELESS.

Some men for sudden joy do weep;
And some in sorrow sing,
When that they lie in danger deep,
To put away mourning.

Between them both will I begin,
Being in joy and pain,
In sighing to lament my sin,
But yet rejoice again.

My sinful life doth still increase,
My sorrow is the more:
From wickedness I cannot cease,
Woe is my heart therefore.

Sometimes when I think to do well,
And serve God night and day,
My wicked nature doth rebel,
And leadeth me astray.

As bound and captive unto sin,
Which grieveth me full sore;
This misery do I live in,
Woe is my heart therefore.

Indeed sometime I do repent,
And pardon do obtain:
But yet (alas), incontinent,
I fall to sin again.

My corrupt nature is so ill,
Offending more and more,
That I displease my Lord God still,
Woe is my heart therefore.

Woe is my heart, woe is my mind,
Woe is my soul and sprite,
That to my God I am unkind,
In whom I should delight.

His love always I should regard,
Which toward me was so pure ;
But I with sin do Him reward,
Oh most unkind creature !

The beast, the bird, the fish, the fowl,
Their Maker do obey :
But I, that am a living soul,
Am far much worse than they.

For they, according to their kind,
To serve Him do not cease :
But I, with sinful heart and mind,
Do daily Him displease.

Thus do I sore complain of sin,
And with king David weep ;
For I do feel, my heart within,
The wrath of God full deep.

To heaven mine eyes I dare not lift,
Against it I have trespassed :
And in the earth I find no shift,
Nor succour that can last.

What shall I do ? shall I despair ?
And from my Saviour slide ?
Nay, God forbid, there is no fear,
Since Christ for me hath died.

God became man, and for us men
He died and rose again :
His mercy great, we may see then,
For ever doth remain.

Therefore my sin I will confess
To God, and mourning make ;
Who will forgive the same doubtless,
For His Son Christes'* sake.

If sin in me God should respect,
Then do I know full well,
His justice would me soon reject
To the deep pit of hell.

His glorious eyes cannot abide
The foul and filthy smoke
Wherewith I am, on every side,
Covered as with a cloak.

But He in Christ doth me behold,
In whom He doth delight ;
And mine offences manifold
Through Him releaseth quite,

Reputing me amongst the just,
Forgiving all my sin :
Therefore my faith, my hope, my trust
Shall ever be in Him.

O Lord, increase true faith in me ;
Thy good Spirit to me give :
That I may grow in love toward Thee,
And ever seek to live

In true obedience of Thy will,
And thankfulness of heart ;
And with Thy grace so guide me still,
That I never depart

From Thy true Word and Testament,
All the days of my life ;
Nor from Thy church most innocent,
Thine own true spouse and wife.

But from that filthy whore of Rome
Lord keep me evermore ;

*Christ His.

As graciously Thou hast yet done—
Thanks be to Thee therefore.

And since Thou hast, of Thy goodness,
Forgiven me all my sin,
Strengthen me Thy truth for to confess,
And boldly die therein :

That, as I have confessed Thee,
Before the wicked sort,
Thou mayest in Thy good time know me,
To my joy and comfort.

My soul, return unto thy rest,
Thou art well satisfied :
The Lord hath granted thy request,
And nothing thee denied.

Praise be to God, the Father of Might :
Praise be to Thee, O Christ :
Praise be to Thee, O Holy Sprite—
Three in one, God Most Highest.

Continue constant in Christ, and—*CARELESS*.*

A BRIEF ADMONITION WRITTEN TO MRS. JANE
GLASCOCK,

In a book of hers, when she came to the prison to visit
him.

THERE is nothing that the Holy Scripture throughout
doth so much commend unto us, as a true faith and
stedfast trust in the promises of God's eternal mercies
towards us in Jesus Christ. For from the same, as forth
of the chief fountain and well-spring of life, do flow all
kinds of virtues and godly fruits : especially true love to—

* A play upon his name.

wards God, in the which we ought purely to serve Him all the days of our life, and also Christian charity towards our neighbours, as well to help them at all needs, as also not to hurt them by any means. Therefore pray earnestly for the increase of faith and lively feeling of God's mercy: for all things are possible unto him that can undoubtedly believe. Faith is the thing which assureth us of God's mercy, and whereby we vanquish all the fiery darts of the devil; our victory that overcometh the world; the knife that killeth and mortifieth the flesh; and finally, that which setteth us at peace with God, and quieteth our consciences always before Him, and maketh us merry and joyful under the cross, with many more things than I can now express. Pray therefore for faith, in faith. And, for the Lord's sake, beware of popery and popish idolatry, the idol of the wicked mass, and other idolatrous service. Make not your body, which is a member of Christ, a member of Antichrist. Remember, we shall receive of God according to that we do in the body, be it good or evil. Therefore glorify God in your body, which is dearly bought. Betray not the truth, lest the Lord deny you. If God be God, follow Him. You cannot serve two masters. I write not this as doubting you, but by the way of admonition. God keep you from all evil.

My sister dear, God give you grace,
With stedfast faith in Christs * name,

* Christ His.

His Gospel still for to embrace,
And live according to the same.
To die, therefore, think it no shame,
But hope in God with faithful trust ;
And He will give you praise with fame,
When you shall rise out of the dust.
For which most sweet and joyful day
To God with faith your prayer make ;
And think on me, I do you pray,
The which did write this for your sake.
And thus to God I you betake,
Who is your castle and strong rock :
He keep you, whether you sleep or wake.
Farewell, dear mistress Jane Glascock.

IF GOD BE WITH US, WHO CAN BE AGAINST US ?

Though worldly waves do rage apace,
And wicked winds blow out of frame ;
Though mountains move forth of their place,
Through the great tempests of the same :
Yet shall the Lord still you defend
Under the shadow of His wings ;
He loveth you unto the end,
And for your wealth doth work all things.
Therefore in Him put all your trust :
Fear not these boisterous winds that blow ;
The Lord can lay them when He lust,
And bring the raging waves full low.
But your safeguard shall still remain,
In a strong castle of defence.
God grant us well to meet again
With mirth and joy in His presence.

JOHN CARELESS.

TO THE AFFLICTED CHRISTIAN.

Fear not for death, pass not * for bands :
Only in God put thy whole trust :
For God will require thy blood at their hands ;
And this thou dost know, that once die thou must,
Only for Christ thy life if thou give,
Death is no death, but a mean for to live.

* Care not.

John Rough.

John Rough was by birth a Scotchman, who at the age of seventeen had entered the order of Blackfriars at Stirling. He afterwards became chaplain to the Earl of Arran, and changed his views, and received a pension from Henry VIII. He then went to Carlisle, and there married. Under Edward VI., he was presented to a living at Hull, which he held until the persecutions of Mary's reign commenced. He and his wife then fled to Nörden, in Friesland, where he earned his living by knitting. Having to come to England for materials, he was recognised and appointed preacher to a company of the faithful, but was betrayed by a false member and seized at Islington, and on December 22nd, 1557, was committed to the flames.

Written a little before his death, to the Christian Congregation in London, whereof he was a minister and preacher.

THE comfort of the Holy Ghost make you able to give consolation to others in these dangerous days, when Satan is let loose to the trial of the chosen, when it pleaseth our God to sift His wheat from the chaff. I have not leisure and time to write the great temptations I have been under. I speak to God's glory; my care was to have the senses of my soul open to perceive the voice of God, saying, Who that denieth Me before men, them will I deny before My Father and His angels; and to

save the life corporal is to lose the life eternal; and he that will not suffer with Christ, shall not reign with Him. Therefore, most tender ones, I have by God's Spirit given over the flesh, with the fight of my soul, and the spirit hath the victory. The flesh shall now, ere it be long, leave off to sin; the spirit shall reign eternally. I have chosen the death, to confirm the truth by me taught. What can I do more? Consider with yourselves, that I have done it for confirmation of God's truth. Pray that I may continue unto the end. The great part of the assault is past—I praise my GOD. I have, in all my assaults, felt His present aid; I give Him most hearty thanks therefore. Look not back, nor be ye ashamed of Christ's Gospel, nor of the bonds I have suffered for the same; whereby ye may be assured it is the true word of God. The holy ones have been sealed with the same mark. It is no time, for the loss of one man in the battle, for the camp to turn back. Up with men's hearts; blow down the daubed walls of heresies. Let one take the banner, another the trumpet; I mean, not to make corporal resistance, but pray; and ye shall have Elias's defence, and Eliseus's company, to fight for you; for the cause is the Lord's. Now, my brethren, I can write no more; time will not suffer, and my heart with pangs of death is assaulted; but I am at home with my God, yet alive. Pray for me, and salute one another with the holy kiss. The peace of God rest with you all. Amen. From Newgate prison, in haste; the day of my condemnation.

JOHN ROUGH.

Cuthbert Simson.

Cuthbert Simson was a deacon of the Reformed Church, in London, who earnestly laboured for the welfare of his flock. On December 13th, 1557, he was sent for to the Tower and questioned respecting his people, and then, refusing to answer, he was placed on the rack for three hours. On the following Sunday he was again examined, but still remained silent ; they then "bound his two forefingers together, and passing a small arrow between them, drew it through so fast that the blood flowed and the arrow broke. He was then racked again." For five weeks longer they kept him in prison before passing final sentence upon him, and on about March 28th, 1558, he suffered at Smithfield.

A LETTER WRITTEN TO HIS WIFE.

My dearly beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, I cannot write as I do wish unto you. I beseech you with my soul, submit yourself, under the mighty hand of our God, trusting in His mercy ; and He will surely help us, as shall be most unto His glory and our everlasting comfort : being sure of this, that He will suffer nothing to come unto us, but that which shall be most profitable for us. For it is either a correction for our sins, or a trial of our faith, or to set forth His glory, or for all together, and therefore must needs be well done ; for there is nothing that cometh unto us by fortune or chance, but by our heavenly Father's providence ; and therefore pray unto our heavenly Father, that He will ever give us His grace

so to consider it. Let us give Him most hearty thanks for these His fatherly corrections ; for as many as He loveth, He correcteth. And I beseech you now, be of good cheer ; and count the cross of Christ greater riches than all the vain pleasures of England. I do not doubt (I praise God for it) but that you have supped with Christ at His Maundy,* I mean, that you believe in Him, for that is the effect ; and then must you drink of His cup, I mean, His cross, for that doth the cup signify unto us. Take the cup with a good stomach, in the name of God ; and then shall you be sure to have that good wine, Christ's blood to your poor thirsty soul. And when you have the wine, you must drink it out of this cup. Learn this when you come to the Lord's supper. Pray continually. In all things give thanks.

CUTHBERT SIMSON.

TO CERTAIN OF HIS FRIENDS,

Concerning his racking and other cruel torments which he suffered in the Tower.

THE 13th day of December, I was sent to the Tower ; and on the Thursday after I was called into the warehouse before the Constable of the Tower and the Recorder of London, Master Cholmeley. They commanded me to tell them whom I did will to come to the English service. I answered, I would declare nothing. Then was I set in an engine of iron, for the

* The day before Good Friday.

space of three hours as I judged. After that, they asked me if I would tell them. I answered as before. Then was I loosed, and carried to my lodging again. On the Sunday after, I was brought into the same place again before the lieutenant, being also constable, and the recorder of London, and they examined me. As before I had said I answered. Then the lieutenant swore by God, I should tell. Then did they bind my two fore-fingers together, and put a small arrow betwixt them, and drew it through so fast that the blood followed, and the arrow brake. Then they racked me twice. After that was I carried to my lodging again; and ten days after, the lieutenant asked me if I would not confess that which before they had asked me. I said I had said as much as I would. Then five weeks after, he sent me unto the high priest, where I was greatly assaulted; and at whose hand I received the pope's curse, for bearing witness of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And thus I commend you unto God, and to the word of His grace with all them that unfeignedly call upon the name of Jesus; desiring GOD, of His endless mercy, through the merits of His dear Son Jesus Christ, to bring us all to His everlasting kingdom. Amen. I praise God for His great mercy shewed upon us. Sing Hosanna unto the Highest, with me Cuthbert Simson. God forgive me my sins. I ask all the world forgiveness, and I do forgive all the world; and thus I leave this world, in hope of a joyful resurrection.

CUTHBERT SIMSON.

Thomas Leaver.

Being then in exile for the testimony of God's Gospel, to
Master Bradford, prisoner in the Tower of London.

THE grace of God be unto you, with my hearty commendations.

I have seen the places, noted the doctrine and discipline, and talked with the learned men, of Argentine, Basil, Zurich, Berne, Lausanne, and Geneva; and I have had experience in all these places of sincere doctrine, godly order, and great learning, and especially of such virtuous learning, diligence, and charity in Bullinger at Zurich, and in Calvin at Geneva, as doth much advance God's glory, unto the edifying of Christ's church with the same religion for the which you be now in prison. And as I doubt not but you, in reading of their books, have found so much godly and comfortable knowledge; so I am sure that they, in hearing of your constancy and patience, take occasion greatly to rejoice, with thanksgiving unto God, which doth testify His truth unto the world, not only by their writing, but also by your suffering. The Lord therefore, which useth this your suffering, joined with godly learning, to set forth

His glory, not only unto the comfort of simple souls in England, but also unto the great rejoicing and encouraging of the most godly men in all countries, will (as I desire and trust) give you such comfort in conscience, as shall easily bear the pains of your imprisonment. If you desire to suffer or do that thing which might testify the truth, advance the glory, and edify the Church of Christ, truly you have your desire; yea and I ensure* you, very many godly men in divers places give daily thanks unto God in prayer for you.

You know your cause is good; your friends be in favour, and your adversaries in displeasure with the Almighty God, your heavenly Father; your suffering for the truth shall not be unrewarded; your hope in Christ shall never be confounded. For although your bodies be kept within prisons, yet your testimony unto the truth shineth far abroad in the world; and your faithful prayers, in charitable unity joined with many others, be continually presented afore the throne of God. God grant you grace to find and use comfortable meditation of His word, in diligent obedience unto His will. Christ be your keeper in comfort. Amen. From Zurich, the 25th of October, by yours faithfully in Christ,

THOMAS LEAVER.

* Assure.

William Coker.

SEVEN articles, chiefly relating to the Real Presence, were submitted to WILLIAM COKER, a Kentish man, by Thornton, Bishop of Dover, on June 25, 1555, to which Coker declined to subscribe. His persecutor then granted him six days' respite in which to reconsider the questions, but he, remaining firm, was on July fifth condemned to be burnt, and suffered during the latter end of August.

To a friend of his.

As your hearty friend in God, and, through the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, as pertaining to the faith your brother, I send you greeting and most Christian salutations. For your kindness, in that you wrote so speedily to me again, I commend you, and thank God for it; though of necessity (you say) you were partly moved so to do, by reason of my bonds in the Lord. I heartily joyed by occasion of your letter; because I understood thereby the state of mine old friends and godly acquaintance, and how ye all continually labour, as we do, in the Gospel of Christ, which is the word of salvation to as many as believe. Wherein we have this confidence, through our faith in the blood of Christ, that, though Satan and his rabble of ministers do rage never so much

with lying and deceivable power, yea, though he should appear never so glorious and angel-like in the sight of the world, yet shall his fiery darts be quenched, and he never able to prevail against us. For the which testimony of conscience, I give thanks unto God from the bottom of my heart; and pray always unto the Lord, that, as we have begun, even so we may go forwards unto the end, until the time that the darkness be clean put away, and the perfect light shine in our hearts, souls, and bodies, in the eternal kingdom with God; where we shall be sure our enemies shall not prevail against us, but then most victoriously be overcome by that sweet Lamb the Son of God. In the meantime, the Lord preserve and keep us from evil. The Lord make us stout in His cause, and give us grace to confess the truth before this whorish generation. The Lord grant we may work His heavenly will; that, when the time shall come, He may receive us unto Himself in the glory everlasting: to whom be praise and honour, for ever and ever. Amen.

Your brother in bonds for the Lord's cause,

WILLIAM COKER.

Nicholas Shetterden.

NICHOLAS SHETTERDEN was examined in the Spiritual Court, when seven articles relating to the Real Presence in the Sacrament, and to the Roman Catholic Church, were submitted to him. To these he answered in such wise that on 25th of June he was sentenced to be burnt at the stake, and on July 12th, 1555, the sentence was carried out at Canterbury.

To his mother ; a little before his death.

O MY good mother, whom I love with reverence in the Lord, according to my duty, I desire your favourable blessing, and forgiveness of all my misdeeds towards you.

O my dear mother, in few words I wish you the same salvation which I hope myself to feel, and partly taste of, before this come to you to read ; and in the resurrection I verily believe to have it more perfectly in body and soul joined together for ever ; and in that day GOD grant you to see my face with joy ; but, dear mother, then beware of that great idolatry and blasphemous Mass. Oh, let not that be your GOD, which mice and worms can devour ; behold, I call heaven and earth to record, that it is no GOD, yea the fire that consumeth it, and the moistness that causeth it to mould.

And I take Christ's Testament to witness, that it is none of His ordinances, but a mere invention of men, and a snare to catch innocent blood; and now that GOD hath shewed it unto you, be warned in time. Oh, give over old customs, and become new in the truth. What state soever your fathers be in, leave that to God, and let us follow the counsel of His word: dear mother, embrace it with hearty affection; read it with obedience; let it be your pastime, and cast off all carnal affections, and love of worldly things: so shall we meet in joy at the last day, or else I bid you farewell for evermore. Oh, farewell, my friends and lovers all: God grant me to see your faces in joy. Amen. From Westgate, the 11th of July, 1555.

NICHOLAS SHETTERDEN,
appointed to be slain, for Christ's cause, and the
maintenance of His most sound and true religion.

Lady Jane Grey.

To her sister the Lady Catherine ; immediately before she suffered.

I HAVE here sent you, good sister Catherine, a book ; which, although it be not outwardly trimmed with gold, yet inwardly it is more worth than precious stones. It is the book, dear sister, of the law of the Lord ; it is His Testament and last will, which He bequeathed unto us wretches ; which shall lead you to the path of eternal joy ; and if you with a good mind do read it, and with an earnest purpose follow it, it shall bring you to an immortal and everlasting life. It will teach you to live and learn you to die. It shall win you more than you should have gained by the possession of your woeful father's lands. For as, if God had prospered him, you should have inherited his lands ; so if you apply diligently this book, seeking to direct your life after it, you shall be an inheritor of such riches, as neither the covetous shall withdraw from you, neither the thief shall steal, neither yet the moths corrupt. Desire with David, good sister, to understand the law of the Lord your God. Live still to die, that you by death may purchase eternal life. And trust not that the tenderness of your age shall lengthen your life ; for as soon, if God call, goeth the

young as the old. And labour always to learn to die. Defy the world, deny the devil, and despise the flesh ; and delight yourself only in the Lord. Be penitent for your sins, and yet despair not; be strong in faith, and yet presume not ; and desire with St. Paul to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, with whom even in death there is life. Be like that good servant, and even at midnight be waking, lest, when death cometh and stealeth upon you like a thief in the night, you be with the evil servant found sleeping ; and lest, for lack of oil, you be found like the five foolish women, and like him that had not on the wedding garment, and so be cast out from the marriage. Rejoice in Christ, as I praise God I do. Follow the steps of your Master Christ, and take up your cross ; lay your sins on His back, and always embrace Him. And as touching my death, rejoice, as I do (good sister), that I shall be delivered from this corruption, and put on incorruption ; for I am assured that I shall, for losing of a mortal life, win an immortal life. The which I pray God grant you ; send you of His grace to live in His fear, and to die in the true Christian faith ; from the which (in God's name) I exhort you that you never swerve, neither for hope of life, nor for fear of death. For if you will deny His truth to lengthen your life, God will deny you, and yet shorten your days. And if you will cleave unto Him, He will prolong your days, to your comfort and His glory ; to the which glory God bring me now, and you hereafter, when it pleaseth Him to call you. Fare you well, good sister, and put your only trust in God, who only must help you

George Marsh.

GEORGE MARSH was born in Deane, Lancashire, of respectable parents, who educated him well. He married young and earned his living as a farmer. On the death of his wife, he found a suitable home for his children and went himself to Cambridge as a student. He was then ordained minister of the Reformed Church, and for a time acted as curate to Lawrence Saunders. He also laboured earnestly for the cause of religion in his native county of Lancashire. At length he was apprehended for heresy by Coates, Bishop of Chester, and imprisoned. His own account is as follows :—On the 12th of March, whilst at his mother's house, a messenger came to tell him that he was being diligently sought after in Bolton with the view of taking him before the Earl of Derby and his council for examination. His first impulse was to fly, but he finally decided to give himself up. After his examination he was placed "in a windy stone-house," and then left for some days, when he was again sent for to the council. He was afterwards conveyed to Lancaster Castle, and thence to Chester, where the Bishop frequently tried to induce him to subscribe to the tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, but in vain. The Bishop then charged him with having preached false doctrine in the surrounding parishes, and this too he denied ; whereupon Coates decided to pronounce sentence against him : three times, whilst reading the sentence, did he pause to give Marsh time to recant, and the priests and ignorant people standing by prayed him to do so, but he would not, although he "would as fain live as they." The day of his martyrdom at length dawned, and he was led outside the city of Chester to Spittal-Boughton, and there chained to the stake, but the fire was unskilfully made, so that Marsh's sufferings were frightfully

prolonged : he died however so patiently that the people said he was a martyr. Thereupon the Bishop preached a sermon calling him a heretic and asserting that he was now a "fire-brand in hell."

TO CERTAIN OF HIS DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS,

Dwelling at Manchester, in Lancashire.

GRACE be with you and peace, from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

After salutations in Christ to you, with thanks for your friendly remembrances of me, desiring and wishing unto you, not only in my letters but also in my daily prayers, such consolation in spirit, and taste of heavenly treasures, that ye may thereby continually work in faith, labour in love, persevere in hope, and be patient in all your tribulations and persecutions, even unto the end and glorious coming of Christ ; these shall be earnestly to exhort and beseech you in Christ, that, as ye have received the Lord Jesus, even so to walk, rooted in Him : and not to be afraid of any terror of your adversaries, be they never so many, and mighty, and you on the other side never so few and weak ; for the battle is the Lord's. And as, in times past, God was with Abraham, Moses, Isaac, David, the Maccabees, and other, and fought for them, and delivered all their enemies into their hands ; even so hath He promised to be with us also unto the world's end, and so to assist, strengthen, and help us, that no man shall be able to withstand us. For as I was with Moses, so will I be with thee (saith God), and neither leave thee nor

forsake thee. Be strong and bold, neither fear nor dread ; for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. Now if God be on our side, who can be against us? In this our Spiritual warfare is no man overcome, unless he traitorously leave and forsake his Captain, either cowardly cast away his weapons, or willingly yield himself to his enemies, either* fearfully turn his back and fly. Be strong therefore in the Lord, dear brethren, and in the power of His might ; and put on all the armour of God, that ye may be able to stand stedfast against the crafty assaults of the devil. Now what weapons ye must fight withal, learn of St. Paul, a champion both much exercised and also most valiant and invincible. For we must think none other, but that the life of man is a perpetual warfare upon earth : as the examples of all godly men throughout all ages do declare. The valiant warrior St. Paul, being delivered from the hands of the ungodly, and that so many times, and from so many extreme perils and dangers of death, as he himself doth witness, is fain to commit himself in the end to the rough waters of the sea, where he was in great peril and jeopardy of his own life. Yet was God always (to the great comfort of all that hear of it) most ready to comfort and succour him, and gloriously delivered him out of all his troubles ; so that no man that did invade him could do him any harm, and in the end he was compelled to say, I have finished my course, the time of my departing is

* Or.

at hand, I long to be loosed and to be with Christ, which thing is best of all, most heartily desiring death. These things be written for our learning and comfort ; and be to us a sure obligation,* that, if we submit ourselves to God and His holy Word, no man shall be able to hurt us ; and that He will deliver us from all troubles, yea, even from death also, until such time as we covet and desire to die.

Let us, therefore, run with patience unto the battle that is set before us, and look unto Jesus the captain and finisher of our faith, and after His example, for the reward's sake that is set out unto us, patiently bear the cross and despise the shame ; for all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Christ is no sooner baptised, and declared to the world to be the Son of God, but Satan is by and by ready to tempt Him. Which thing we must look for also : yea, the more we shall increase in faith and virtuous living, the more strongly will Satan assault us ; whom we shall learn, after the example of Christ, to fight against and overcome with the holy and sacred Scriptures and Word of God, which is our heavenly armour and sword of the Spirit. And let the fasting of Christ, while He was tempted in the wilderness, be unto us an example of sober living, not for the space of forty days (as the papists do fondly fancy of their own brains), but as long as we are in the wilderness of this wretched life, assaulted of Satan, who like a roaring lion walketh about, and ceaseth not seeking our utter

* Pledge.

destruction ; neither can the servants of God at any time come and stand before God, that is, lead a godly life and walk innocently before God, but Satan cometh also among them ; that is, he daily accuseth, findeth fault, vexeth, persecuteth, and troubleth the godly ; for it is the nature and property of the devil always to do harm and to hurt, unless he be forbidden of God ; for unless God do permit him, he can dō nothing at all, no, not so much as enter into a filthy hog ; but we are more of price than many hogs before God, if we cleave unto His Son by faith. Let us, therefore, knowing Satan's deceits and rancour, walk the more warily ; and take unto us the shield of faith, wherewith we may be able to quench and overcome all the fiery and deadly darts of the wicked. Let us take to us the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and learn to use the same according to the example of our grand captain Christ. Let us fast and pray continually ; for this frantic kind of devils goeth not out otherwise, as Christ doth teach us, but by faithful prayers and fasting, which is true abstinence and soberness of living, if we use the same according to the doctrine of the Gospel and Word of God. Fasting is acceptable to God, if it be done without hypocrisy ; that is to say, if we use it to this intent, that thereby this mortal body and disobedient carcase may be tamed, and brought under the subjection of the Spirit ; and again, if we fast to this intent, that we may spare wherewith to help and succour our poor needy brethren. This fast do the true Christians use all the days of their life ; although

among the common sort of people remaineth yet still that superstitious kind of fasting, which God so earnestly reproveth by His prophet Esay. For as for true chastening of the body, and abstaining from vice, with shewing mercy towards our needy neighbours, we will neither understand nor hear of; but still think, with the Jews, that we do God a great pleasure when we fast, and that we then fast when we abstain from one thing, and fill our bellies with another. And verily in this point doth our superstition much exceed the superstition of the Jews; for we never read that they ever took it for a fast to abstain from flesh, and to eat either fish or white meat, as they call it.

To fasting and prayer must be joined alms, and mercy towards the poor and needy. And that our alms may be acceptable unto God, three things are chiefly required. First, that we give with a cheerful and joyful heart, for the Lord loveth a cheerful giver. Secondly, that we give liberally, putting aside all niggardship; knowing that He that soweth little shall reap little, and he that soweth plentifully shall reap plentifully. Let every man therefore do according as he is able. The poorest caitiff in the world may give as great and acceptable an alms in the sight of God, as the richest man in the world can do. The poor widow that did offer but two mites, which make a farthing, did highly please Christ, insomuch that He affirmed with an oath, that she of her penury had added more to the offerings of God than all the rich men, which of their superfluity had cast in very much. For if

there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not. Thirdly, we must give without hypocrisy and ostentation, not seeking the praise of men, or our own glory or profit. And although the Scriptures in some places make mention of a reward to our alms and other good works, yet ought we not to think that we do merit or deserve any thing ; but rather we ought to acknowledge, that God of His mere mercy rewardeth in us His own gifts. For what hath he that giveth alms, that he hath not received ? He then that giveth unto a poor man any manner of thing, giveth not of his own, but of those goods which he hath received of God. What hast thou, saith the Apostle, that thou hast not received ? If thou hast received it, why rejoicest thou, as though thou hadst not received it ?

This sentence ought to be had in remembrance of all men ; for if we have nothing but that which we have received, what can we deserve ? or what need we to dispute and reason of our own merits ? It cometh of the free gift of God, that we live, that we love God, that we walk in His fear ; where is our deserving then ?

We must also in this our spiritual warfare arm ourselves with continual prayer, a very necessary, strong, and invincible weapon ; and, after the example of Christ and all other godly men, cry heartily unto God in faith in all our distresses and anguishes. Let us go boldly to the seat of grace, where we shall be sure to receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. For now is

pride and persecution increased ; now is the time of destruction and wrathful displeasure.

Wherefore, my dear brethren, be ye fervent in the law of God, and jeopard ye your lives, if need shall so require, for the testament of the fathers ; and so shall ye receive great honour, and an everlasting name. Remember Abraham ; was not he found faithful in temptation, and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness ? Joseph in time of his trouble kept the commandment, and was made a lord of Egypt. Phineas was so fervent for the honour of God, that he obtained the covenant of an everlasting priesthood. Joshua, for fulfilling the word of God, was made the captain of Israel. Caleb bare record before the congregation, and received an heritage. David also, in his merciful kindness, obtained the throne of an everlasting kingdom. Elias, being zealous and fervent in the law, was taken up into heaven. Ananias, Azarias, and Misael remained steadfast in the faith, and were delivered out of the fire. In like manner Daniel, being unguilty, was saved from the mouth of the lions. And thus ye may consider throughout all ages since the world began, that whosoever put their trust in God were not overcome. Fear not ye then the words of ungodly men ; for their glory is but dung and worms. To-day are they set up, and to-morrow are they gone ; for they are turned into earth, and their memorial cometh to nought. Wherefore let us take good hearts unto us, and quit ourselves like men in the law ; for if we do the things that are commanded us in the

law of the Lord our God, we shall obtain great honour therein.

Beloved in Christ, let us not faint because of affliction, wherewith God trieth all them that are sealed unto life everlasting ; for the only way into the kingdom of God is through much tribulation. For the kingdom of heaven (as God teacheth us by His prophet Esdras) is like a city builded and set upon a broad field, and full of all good things ; but the entrance is narrow and sudden, full of sorrow and travail, perils and labours, like as if there were a fire at the right hand, and a deep water at the left, and as it were one strait path between them both, so small that there could but one man go there. If this city now were given to an heir, and he never went through the perilous way, how would he receive his inheritance ? Wherefore seeing we are in this narrow and strait way, which leadeth unto the most joyful and pleasant city of everlasting life, let us not stagger, neither turn back, being afraid of the dangerous and perilous way, but follow our captain Jesus Christ in the narrow and strait way, and be afraid of nothing, no not even of death itself ; for it is He that must lead us to our journey's end, and open us the door unto everlasting life. Consider also the course of this world ; how many there be which for their master's sake, or for a little promotion's sake, would adventure their lives in worldly affairs, as commonly in wars, and yet is their reward but light and transitory, and ours is unspeakable, great, and everlasting. They suffer pains to be made lords on the earth for a short

season ; how much more ought we to endure like pains (yea, peradventure, much less), to be made kings in heaven for evermore? Consider also the wicked of this world, which for a little pleasure's sake, or to be avenged on their enemies, will fight with sword and weapons, and put themselves in danger of imprisonment and hanging. So much as virtue is better than vice, and God mightier than the devil, so much ought we to excel them in this our spiritual battle. And seeing, brethren, it hath pleased God to set me, and that most worthy minister of Christ, John Bradford your countryman, in the forefront of this battle, where for the time is most danger, I beseech you all in the bowels of Christ to help us, and all others our fellow-soldiers standing in like perilous place, with your prayers to God for us, that we may quit ourselves like men in the Lord, and give some example of boldness and constancy, mingled with patience in the fear of God ; that ye and others our brethren, through our example, may be so encouraged and strengthened to follow us, that ye also may leave example to your weak brethren in the world to follow you. Amen.

Consider what I say : the Lord give us understanding in all things. Brethren, the time is short : it remaineth that ye use this world as though ye used it not : for the fashion of this world vanisheth away. See that ye love not the world, neither the things that are in the world ; but set your affections on heavenly things, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Be meek and long-suffering ; serve and edify one another, with the gift that

God hath given you. Beware of strange doctrine ; lay aside the old conversation of greedy lusts, and walk in a new life. Beware of all uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking, false doctrine, and drunkenness ; rejoice and be thankful towards God, and submit yourselves one to another. Cease from sin ; spend no more time in vice : be sober, and apt to pray ; be patient in trouble, love each other, and let the glory of God and profit of your neighbours be the only mark you shoot at in all your doings. Repent ye of the life that is past, and take better heed to your doings hereafter. And above all things cleave ye fast to Him who was delivered to death for our sins, and rose again for our justification. To whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and rule for evermore. Amen.

Salute from me in Christ all others which love us in the faith, and at your discretion make them partakers of these letters ; and pray ye all for me, and other in bonds for the Gospel, that the same God, which by His grace hath called us from wicked papistry unto true Christianity, and now of love proveth our patience by persecution, will of His mercy and favour in the end gloriously deliver us, either by death or by life, to His glory. Amen.

At Lancaster, the 30th of August, 1554 ; by me, an unprofitable servant and prisoner of Christ,

GEORGE MARSH.

Stephen Cotton.

In a retired field at Islington a company of earnest Protestants were in the habit of meeting together for prayer. Once, as they were thus assembled, Sir Roger Cholmeley and the recorder of the City surprised them and took twenty-two of them prisoners, and conveyed them to Newgate. Amongst them was STEPHEN COTTON, who was kept in prison seven weeks, word being sent him, that if he would hear mass, he should be set free ; from time to time, too, he was examined by Thomas Derbyshire, Chancellor to Bishop Bonner. Cotton, however, remained true to his faith, and on June 27th, 1557, was burnt at Brentford.

To his Brother JOHN COTTON, declaring how he was
beaten of Bonner. ♦

BROTHER, in the name of the Lord Jesus, I commend me unto you ; and I do heartily thank you for your godly exhortation and counsel, in your last letter declared to me. And albeit I do perceive by your letter you are informed, that, as we are divers persons in number, so are we of contrary sects, conditions, and opinions, contrary to that good opinion you had of us at your last being with us in Newgate, be you most assured, good brother in the Lord Jesus, that we are all of one mind, one faith, one assured hope in our Lord Jesus, whom I trust we all together with one spirit, one brotherly love, do daily call upon for mercy and forgiveness of our sins, with earnest

repentance of our former lives ; and by whose precious blood-shedding we trust to be saved only, and by no other means. Wherefore, good brother, in the name of the Lord, seeing these impudent people whose minds are altogether bent to wickedness, envy, uncharitableness, evil-speaking, do go about to slander us with untruth, believe them not, neither let their wicked sayings once enter into your mind. And I trust one day to see you again, although now I am in God's prison, which is a joyful school to them that love their Lord and God ; and to me, being a simple scholar, most joyful of all. Good brother, once again I do, in the name of our Lord Jesus, exhort you to pray for me, that I may fight strongly in the Lord's battle, to be a good soldier to my captain Jesus Christ our Lord ; and desire my sister also to do the same ; and do not ye mourn or lament for me, but be ye glad and joyful of this my trouble. For I trust to be loosed out of this dungeon shortly, and to go to everlasting joy, which never shall have end.

I heard how ye were the commissioners for me, and how ye were suspected to be one of our company. I pray you, sue no more for me, good brother. But one thing I shall desire you—to be at my departing out of this life that you may bear witness with me that I shall die (I trust in God) a true Christian, and I hope all my companions in the Lord our God ; and therefore believe not these evil-disposed people, who are the authors of all untruth. I pray you provide for me a long shirt, against the day of our deliverance : for the

shirt you gave me last, I have given it to one of my companions, who had more need than I; and as for the money and meat you sent us, the bishop's servants delivered none to us, neither he whom you had so great trust in. Brother, there is none of them to trust to; for *qualis magister, talis servus*.* I have been twice beaten, and threatened to be beaten again, by the bishop himself. I suppose we shall go into the country to Fulham, to the bishop's house, and there be arraigned. I would have you to hearken as much as you can; for when we shall go, it shall be suddenly done. Thus fare ye well. From the coalhouse, this present Friday.

Your brother,

STEPHEN COTTON.

* Like master, like man.

Richard Rothe.

At Islington, on 17th September, 1557, RICHARD ROTHE was burnt for his faith.

To certain condemned at Colchester, and ready to die for the Lord's cause; written with his own blood.

OH, dear brethren and sisters, how much have you to rejoice in God, that He hath given you such faith to prevail against these blood-thirsty tyrannies thus far; and no doubt He that hath begun that good work in you will fulfil it unto the end. Oh, dear hearts in Christ, what a crown of glory shall ye receive with Christ in the kingdom of God! Oh, that it had been the good will of God, that I had been ready to have gone with you; for I lie in my lord's little-ease in the day, and in the night I lie in the coalhouse, from * Ralph Allerton, or any other. And we look every day when we shall be condemned: for he said that I should be burned within ten days before Easter; but I lie still at the pool's brink, and every man goeth in before me. But we abide patiently the Lord's leisure, with many bands, in fetters and stocks, by the which we have received great joy in God. And now fare you well, dear brethren and sisters in this world; but I trust to see you in the

* Apart from.

heaven, face to face. Oh, brother Munt, with your wife and my dear sister Rose, oh how blessed are you in the Lord, that God hath found you worthy to suffer for His sake—with all the rest of my dear brethren and sisters, known and unknown. Oh, be joyful even unto death; fear it not, saith Christ, for I have overcome death. Oh, dear hearts, seeing that Jesus Christ will be our help, tarry ye the Lord's leisure. Be strong, let your hearts be of good comfort, and wait you still for the Lord. He is at hand; yea, the angel of the Lord pitcheth his tent round about them that fear Him and delivereth them which way He seeth best; for our lives are in the Lord's hands, and they can do nothing unto us before God suffer them: therefore give all thanks to God. Oh, my dear hearts, now shall you be clothed with long white garments upon the Mount Sion, with the multitude of saints, and with Jesus Christ our Saviour, which will never forsake us. Oh, blessed virgins, ye have played the wise virgins' part, in that ye have taken oil in your lamps, that ye may enter with the Bridegroom, when He cometh, into the everlasting joy. But as for the foolish, they shall be shut out, because they made not themselves ready to suffer with Christ, neither go about to take up His cross. Oh, how precious shall your death be in the sight of the Lord; for dear is the death of His saints. Farewell, mine own dear hearts, and pray. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen, amen. Pray, pray, pray.

By me, RICHARD ROTHE,

Written with mine own blood.

A LETTER,

Written and cast out of the Castle of Canterbury, by the prisoners there in bands for God's word ; declaring how the papists went about to famish them to death : of the which company, five were famished amongst them already.

BE it known unto all men that shall read or hear read these our letters, that we, the poor prisoners of the Castle of Canterbury for God's truth, are kept and lie in cold irons, and our keeper will not suffer any meat to be brought to us to comfort us. And if any man do bring anything, as bread, butter, cheese, or any other food, the said keeper will charge them that so bring us anything, except money or raiment, to carry it with them again ; or else if he do receive any food of any for us, he keepeth it for himself, and he and his servants do spend it, so that we have nothing thereof. And thus the keeper withholdeth and keepeth away our victuals from us, inso-much that there are five of us, prisoners there for God's truth, famished already. And thus is it his mind to famish us all : and we think he is appointed of the bishops and priests, and also of the justices so to famish us ; and not only us of the said Castle, but all other prisoners in

other prisons for the like cause to be also famished. Notwithstanding, we write not these our letters to the intent we might not afford * to be famished for the Lord Jesus' sake: but for this cause and intent; that they, having no law so to famish us in prison, should not do it privily, but that the murderers' hearts should be openly known to all the world, that all men may know of what church they are, and who is their father.

Out of the Castle of Canterbury.

* Be content.

**They are punished in few things, but in many
things shall they be rewarded.**

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